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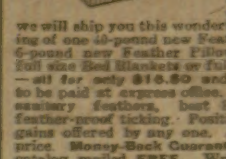
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CHICAGO LEDGER

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Concluding

THE VOODOO

By Augustin W. Breeden

CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)

DOUBTLESS, I thought, this clan of demon worshipers had ceased to try to do me physical harm simply because the spirits of the air were at last in league with them against me and could finish me up at their will. It was a horrible thought. I regretted now that I had not reached up and grasped that dangling snake where it hung, or reached out and touched the miniature coffin. Death would have been better than this uncertainty. Anything would be better than that I should suffer what I was now suffering.

Presently I tried another tack. That writhing snake was merely a physical trick worked with a string, I told myself, and that coffin and image was just another trick of legerdemain to impress me and mesmerize me. But if so why had I seen the tiny snake writhe and the corpse move? And why had the thing grown to full size beneath my very eyes. Well, my mind was once more traveling in vicious circles. I tried to stop thinking but could not. Then I began vividly to see that Voodoo hell where I had witnessed the Calinda dance, and the spider eyes of the ancient negress were fixed in hatred upon me. I cried out in terror, tho I was not asleep and my eyes were wide open; and Boudreaux knew then that I was indeed sick and undone.

Etoile came in, and thru all my delirious ravings about witch doctors and coffins and corpses of myself, I was subconsciously aware of her cool hand upon my brow and her starry eyes gazing in pity upon me.

"You're a sick man," said Boudreaux that night. "Tell me before you go off your nut again if there is anything you want me or the police to do."

I thought about the prisoner I was holding and imagined my death would only be the more horrible if I held him where he was.

"Yes," I said, "there is a prisoner under the old Hotel Royal in a sort of wine vault. Go there and release him, but don't tell him who it was that locked him up." I told him how he could reach the place by removing a panel in one of the big pillars.

"I'll do what you say," replied Boud. "But haven't you any clews other than those you sent in the other day? Can't any arrests be made, for your protection if for nothing else?"

"No," I sighed wearily, "I'm done. I'm not going to have anything more to do with Voodoo chasing. I'm whipped!"

"Well, just forget it," he soothed in his big comfortable voice. "I'll send a party down there and have your man turned out."

I drew a rough sketch of the rotunda and made a cross at the point where the entrance to the wine vault could be found. The next morning Boudreaux came to me and said:

"Harry, I can't find an opening of any sort at the point you describe."

I explained the chart of the floor to him again.

"I looked at that very point myself," he said. "There is no opening of any sort there."

"Wait," I said, "I'm feeling better this morning. I'll get into the car and go down there with you."

He protested that I was not well enough to go, but I insisted that I was; and go I did. At any rate I had now shaved off my beard and had my hair cut, and with goggles and other modern make-up I looked quite different from Fakey Jake or the Grand Swami. The bright sunlight was filtering into the dark old caravansary thru the cobwebbed windows when we reached it. But I could not find my entrance. The whole rotunda looked different. The pillar in which the sliding panel was located seemed completely gone or rather in my bewilderment, it seemed that it had never existed. I was completely flabbergasted.

"What do you say?" asked Boudreaux.

I wilted right on the spot. I know good old Boud did not know how hard hit I had been or he would never have pushed the question. He hurriedly took me home and that day I developed a raging fever, which required the attention of a doctor. And in my ravings I added the horror of a man imprisoned beneath the street, walled in like a corpse in a tomb, to all the other horrors in my brain. It was bad enough to be defeated and marked for death, I thought. But to be guilty of murdering a person who was perhaps innocent of any wrong-doing, this was too much.

In my delirium I was never granted the sweet respite of a complete unconsciousness. My temperature was high, yet I was not confined to my bed. I was delirious, yet I walked about the room and talked quite rationally a part of the time. And I grew thinner and paler daily. My friend, Doctor Corrigan, made a blood test but reported the presence of no specific germ. I seemed slowly dying, and yet I was dying of nothing but those visions that constantly haunted my brain.

And now it was that a third hallucination began to haunt me. Almost nightly I seemed to hear and feel that awful drumming up for the Calinda dance. Always I wanted to go, and my friends usually had a hard time to dissuade me. In all these days sweet Etoile was almost constantly at my side. Always when my brow was the most feverish I felt her cool hand upon it. Always when my delirium was raging at its worst I saw her starry eyes fixed in pity upon me. I believe today that had it not been for her constant and tender ministrations I should certainly have died.

Then one night, just to convince me that there was nothing to my hallucinations, old Boudreaux agreed to go with me to that subterranean hell in which I had witnessed the Calinda dance. I had insisted for hours that I heard the drum call of the Voodoo, and at midnight we went. We reached the place, and with heart beating a rataplan up in my eardrums I went and stood on the cover of the manhole. There was no result. And so Boudreaux and I together lifted the cover off the manhole and together climbed down into the hole. Using our flashlights we made our way along a sewer built by the city and somewhat neglected, but we found no outlet to left or right. I began to doubt if I had ever been to any Voodoo dance. I began to doubt lest my senses had lied to me from the first. It was a horrible doubt, for it amounted to doubting my own sanity. I saw that altho he humored my whims in everything and pretended to believe the

(Continued on Page 18.)

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Dopey

An Amusing Mystery

By FRANKLIN STRINGFELLOW

In a Daze Momma Watched the Expressman Deposit Them in the Center of the Office Floor. "How Much More You Got?" She Gasped in Astonishment.

"RINGS on her fingers, bells on her——" Myrtle Styres didn't go so far in her make-up as to wear bells on her oes, but she certainly did wear rings on her fingers—ten of them; one for each finger; diamond rings; all real. Advertised on the program as the "Lady of the Diamonds," Myrtle and her husband made up the vaudeville firm of "Curley and Curley—Singing and Dancing Artists," entour with the road show, "Life in New York," Abe Fichman manager.

Some show! And some act! Really, Myrtle should have been satisfied. She was not, tho; that is, not after the first few weeks. And, after becoming dissatisfied, each round of applause, each favorable press notice, each spoken word of praise, instead of pleasing her, but added to her dissatisfaction. In a word, she felt that she and her husband had signed for less money than should have been justly theirs, and being naturally aggressive, she didn't propose standing for it.

"Dopey," she said to her husband and partner one evening, "Dopey, we're big fools for putting on this swell act for what we're getting out of it. Let's bone the boss for a raise."

Without hesitation Dopey seconded the motion. "Sure," he agreed heartily. "We need more money. Everybody needs more money. Whisky is high, and getting——"

Impatiently Myrtle shut him up. "Yes; whisky. That's all you think about."

Dopey took not even the trouble to contradict her. "Well, we need the money, anyway," he stated pacifically. "We'll tear right into the sheenie and get what's coming to us."

This they did the following afternoon; they "tore" into Abe Fichman when that gentleman wasn't feeling any too good, with the result that they certainly got what was coming to them, and more.

The trouble was, that Curley and Curley signally failed in the interview to keep to the business in hand. And when big, fat Abe, with his heavy voice, also entered into the muddy sea of personalities, trouble was immediate and dire. Abe was of Semitic extraction, and he wasn't ashamed of the fact. He was also "tight," and fat, and he wasn't ashamed of those qualities either. But to be openly taunted with them by a brace of "bums" was more than he could stand. Forwith he fired them, and fervently promised to bump their heads together if he ever laid eyes upon them again.

Fired! And a thousand miles from booking headquarters! Myrtle and her husband retired to the hotel and faced each other in dismay.

"Dopey, we're up against it. We're strictly on the Fritz!"

Dopey, otherwise Billy Styres, groaned. "You queered the turn," he began. "You're getting too fresh with your——"

"Cut it!" The wife of his bosom voiced the command so furiously that Dopey subsided muttering. "What chance has a lady acting opposite a little runt like you, anyway?"

Dopey thought of several things to say, but he did not utter them. What was the use? Without a word, he arose, put on his hat and coat and left the room. For a moment Myrtle stared unseeingly before her, then, her sudden anger gone, she threw herself across the bed and wept bitterly. She guessed that Dopey had gone for good.

She missed her guess, however, for Dopey came back. That is to say, a sea-going cab brought him as far as the hotel entrance, and one of the bellhops up the stairs and to the door of his room. There, the boy, after pounding upon the door, left him, an inert mass. "Here's yer husband," he yelled, then beat a hasty retreat. It was 3 a. m.

Myrtle dragged her husband into the room, undressed him, washed his face and hands, and put him to bed. No one could have treated him more kindly. She did not blame him for getting drunk this time. Had she been a man, it is not inconceivable that she would have followed the same program. "Gee, I'm glad he came back," was her only thought. Later, tho, she made a discovery which dampened somewhat her spirit of thankfulness. Dopey's pocketbook, containing their entire funds, was missing. In the course of his spree, he had either lost, or spent, every last cent possessed by the firm. Starvation stared them in the face.

Something must be done and without delay. When Dopey had somewhat recovered, Myrtle held a consultation with him.

Dopey, appealed to, shook his head dismally. "Don't ask me," he muttered thickly. "Walk back, I reckon."

"Walk back!" Myrtle laughed a laugh not good to hear. "Walk back! A thousand miles. That's good!"

Dopey groaned hollowly. "I wish I was dead," he muttered, burying his head in his hands.

Somewhat the same idea possessed Myrtle, but she did not give way to it. Had Dopey been a different sort—— As it was, she felt that she just must bear up and figure a way out. Desperately her mind sought to scale the blank wall of hopelessness that hemmed them on all sides.

Suddenly she started; the gloomy frown on her face was pierced by the dawn of a smile. A moment later she laughed outright. "Why didn't I think of that before?" she cried to herself.

Dopey was snoring gently. Dopey must never know. With infinite caution, Myrtle secured her hat and handbag, and left the hotel.

An hour later she returned. With much relief she noted that Dopey, during her absence, had not changed his position. Almost cheerfully she strode across the room and clapped him upon the back.

"Dopey," she cried, "Wake up. I got an idea!"

Dopey blinked like an owl. "I bet it's a idea," he growled, resentful at having been disturbed.

"It's all of that," agreed Myrtle blithely. "What you say to going home and visiting Momma until something turns up?"

"What!" Dopey nearly fell off his chair. "Didn't you say your aunt chased you away on account——"

Myrtle flushed uncomfortably. "No," she snapped, "I didn't. We did have a squabble, and I did quit her in a huff, but she called to me; I could have gone back."

Dopey stared for a moment at the ceiling. "Is walking any good between here and your aunt's?" he finally inquired.

"I got enough to see us there, if that's what you mean."

Dopey did mean just that. He drew a breath of relief. "All right," he agreed, "it's any old port in a storm." Then softly, "Myrt, you couldn't slip a guy a two-bit piece, could you? Honest, Myrt, I was never so——"

Myrtle could, and would, and did so.

CHAPTER II.

MRS. AUGUSTUS WEBBER, better known to her boarders and the world at large as Momma, hitched her ponderous body about in her easychair, the better to gaze after the tall, ungainly figure of her latest roomer as he crossed the office with a quick step, went down the hall, and ascended the stairs in doubles. "I just wonder what that gent is up to, what brings him here, and what he does for a living!" she said to herself.

Momma was more than suspicious concerning this new arrival. Of only one thing about him was she certain, his board money, for that he had paid in advance. As for the rest, she was at sea. That he was not of the class who generally frequented her place, she had deduced at first glance. He was roughly enough dressed, but his hands were smooth and soft, not the hands of a workingman at all. And as for manners—why, the man had no manners. He didn't know what decency was. He ignored Momma completely; whether he met her in the hall or in the dining-room, he paid no more attention to her than if she wasn't there. Not only that, but the rest of the boarders; he ignored them also, while the only words he held with the hired help was to order them about like dogs.

"He's a crook," decided Momma.

Momma would have turned him out at the end of his first week had not times been so hard. What with Pop out of work, the rent of that thirty-five room hotel building to meet, and roomers so scarce that she had to let a parcel of Armenian peddlers into her best room, a person couldn't afford to be choicy. Momma sighed and shook her head. She had about decided to do up his room tomorrow herself, and to keep her eyes wide open while she was at it.

Wearily Momma arose to her feet and turned low the gas. Ten o'clock, and most of the boys were in, and those who weren't had better have their latch-keys along, else they might have to sleep out of doors. Later, Momma would several times arise to let some of her forgetful "boys" in, and she knew it as well as tho it had already happened, but still she vented the same nightly hope that it wouldn't happen

this night, and the threat to let them remain outside in case it did. Then she waddled down the hall to her room. About to enter, she paused uncertainly, then released the knob and toilsomely made her way to the second floor.

Momma felt fagged this evening, and came near foregoing her nightly round of inspection; but a vague premonition of evil prompted her to do it anyway. She hadn't the slightest idea what she might find, nor the slightest notion of what she would do in case she found anything wrong, but this she did know: In the event of an untoward happening within the precincts of her authority, she wished to be the first to know it. Well she remembered the counterfeiter who had manufactured his spurious wares right under her roof for a solid month, only desisting when an officer of the law led him away. Momma still blushed at the thought of it. Not that she considered counterfeiting especially bad, but to have some one carrying it on without her knowledge!

At the landing Momma paused for breath, then crept stealthily down the hall, pausing to listen before each door as she did so. Most of the occupants were seemingly asleep, not a sound issuing from their rooms. Others, however, were frankly awake; lights streamed freely thru the transoms, and sounds in plenty issued, none tho, that could be cataloged in the least as suspicious, unless old Brown's complaint to his wife about the cooking could be construed as such. But Momma cared nothing for his opinion. If old Brown didn't like her cooking, let him pay up his back rent and depart.

"Ah!" Momma had reached the room occupied by the suspicious one. Something out of the way here! Light, plenty of it, but listen closely as she would, she could detect no sound from within. Fully five minutes she stood there.

"That's funny! Maybe the man's went to sleep and left his light burning."

Some of her boarders were that way. They didn't seem to care how rapidly the gas bill mounted. Momma didn't propose standing for any such waste.

Another minute or so Momma waited impatiently. Then she knocked. "He might as well be mad as me," she reasoned, knocking again.

No response. "Mighty queer!" A third time she knocked, harder than before. "Maybe he's dead!"

At the sudden thought Momma recoiled from the door. But only momentarily. Momma was no coward; if anybody in her house was dead she wanted to know it right away. For a moment Momma entertained the notion of calling for help, a notion quickly stifled by thought of the laugh she would receive in case the man was not dead.

"Here goes," she exclaimed under her breath, and gritting her teeth, she twisted the knob. And wonder of wonders, the door swung open. It wasn't even locked. Another thing. The minute the door swung open but deepened the budding mystery. There was no one, either dead or alive within the room. For the moment, a great indignation at the shameful waste of gas obliterated all other considerations. Once in the room, however, another aspect of the case presented itself. Where on earth could the fellow be? With her own eyes only a short time previous had she seen him ascend the stairs. That he was visiting with any of the other roomers was not to be thought of; to the last man—and woman—all in the house disliked and mistrusted the aloof stranger. And besides, hadn't Momma been listening at the doors!

Momma stood as tho in a trance until a possible solution of the mystery entered her mind. "I just bet he's gone down the back stairs and slipped out of the kitchen door," she grunted. "And I bet he's left it open," she added angrily.

Once more she glanced about the room. Everything seemed as usual. With her mind upon the gas bill, Momma reached up to turn off the flaring jet, but reconsidered the action. "I just wonder——" Momma was very sleepy and tired, but she just couldn't bring herself to leave that room without first looking about a little.

It was no thoro search that she made; she began at the closet, and quit at the closet; but what she found there was enough to justify the suspicions of a far less suspicious nature than Momma's.

In the first place, there were the man's clothes; the only ones she had ever seen him wear; hat, suit, shoes, shirt—everything. It was while bending down, the better to identify them, that Momma made the really thrilling discovery—eight cans of corn, a pair of women's shoes, and a ham!"

"What you think of that, now!" Momma scrambled to her feet in a hurry, her whole being thrilled with unaccustomed excitement. The man was a thief! She would have pursued her search further had not at that moment thoughts of the unlatched kitchen door intruded. What was to prevent his return! Without pausing to turn off the light, she hastened from the room, and grasping the banister heavily for support, she toiled down the steps as quickly as her bulk would allow.

I'll lock that door so tight he can't get back in again," she muttered hoarsely.

Momma needn't have hurried tho, for when she finally reached it, it was only to find that the back door hadn't been tampered with. It was still securely locked. Even the heavy bar was in place.

Momma scratched her head in sudden bewilderment. "Wouldn't——" What she might have said will never be given to the public, for at that instant a violent pounding at the front entrance caused her thoughts to take another direction. Agitatedly she clumped the length of the hall.

"I bet it's him," she puffed in sudden rage.

CHAPTER III.

"WHAT you mean, going out like that and leaving your light——" Momma turned the bolt, yanked the door suddenly open, and thrust her face violently outward. Then, as suddenly, she subsided, gasping. It was not the tall angular form of the suspicious boarder that faced her.

Instead, a rather fleshy young woman in her early twenties, much furbelowed as to dress, set off with white shoes and a beplumed picture hat, sprang petulantly past her and into the room. Closely following came a wizened and sad-looking little man, also much overdressed. Myrtle and her husband had come home.

"I say——" began the little man pettishly, but his wife impatiently waved him aside. "Shut up, Dopey," she ordered as tho speaking to a child. Then,

Thru the Flickering Haze Thrown by the Low-turned Light She Saw the Indeterminate Figure of a Man.

"Momma, haven't you a word of welcome for your niece?"

Momma gasped like a fish out of water and flopped into a chair. "How do you, do, Myrtle," she said weakly. "I didn't know you was coming. I haven't seen or heard a word of you since——" For the first time, apparently, she became aware of Dopey. "Who's that with you?" she inquired with sudden energy.

"I say!" Somehow Dopey didn't relish Momma's tone or her impertinence. "I'm this lady's——"

"Shut up!" Once more Myrtle subdued her husband. "Momma, this is my husband, Mr. Billy Styres. He's an actor. I'm an actress. Vodeville. We make big money, and——"

"She called the manager a big fat——"

"Shut up, Dopey!—and we thought we'd come home to see how you and Pop was making it."

"Hm!" Momma regarded her dead sister's child mistrustfully. "Where'd you get all those diamond rings?" she asked by way of changing the subject.

"These! Why, me and Dopey bought 'em at different times. I use 'em in my act. You see, I'm billed as 'The Lady With the Diamonds,' and——"

"What does your husband do?"

Dopey started up from the doze he had fallen into. "Who! Me! Why, I dance and sing. But Myrt is getting too fat to dance much, and her singing——"

"Dopey!"

Doped switched. "You haven't anything around here a fellow might drink, have you?" he asked Momma hopefully.

There wasn't. Momma was about to convey this information aciduously, when there came a diversion. Myrtle's baggage arrived.

In a daze Momma watched the expressman throw three big trunks off his truck, and, after herculean effort, deposit them in the center of the office floor. "How much more you got?" she gasped in astonishment.

"This is all." The expressman pulled from his pocket a slip of paper. "It'll be a dollar—excess baggage," he announced.

"A dol——" Myrtle pulled forth her purse, then seemingly reconsidered. "You pay it, Momma," she said sweetly. "I'm short of change."

Momma eyed her niece sharply a moment, then reached for her pocketbook and paid the charges. Methodically she closed the doors and locked them. "I'm expecting you to pay back that dollar first thing in the morning," she said.

"Aw, Momma!" Myrtle colored violently, then with an effort controlled her temper. Some one was coming. A heavy step in the vestibule, a key inserted in the lock, and the door swung open, admitting to view a pleasant-faced, middle-aged man of medium height. "Hello, folks," was his blithe salutation.

Instantly Momma's face became wreathed in smiles. "Why, good evening, Mr. Jones," she beamed. "Let me make you acquainted with my niece Myrtle and her husband. They are actors."

Mr. Jones was pleased to make their acquaintance. "Mr. Jones is a detective," Momma informed her visitors.

Dopey showed some interest. "What do you detect?" he asked.

Mr. Jones laughed. "I could detect a dollar bill a block off," he said jokingly.

"I could detect a drink two blocks off," rejoined Dopey so drearily that Mr. Jones immediately took the hint. "It seems to me that I have a little snort of something up in my room. If you would come——"

Dopey would, and made no pretense of refusing. "Lead the way, Old Timer," he cried with indecent haste.

Myrtle looked after her departing spouse with a sigh. "Poor Dopey," she said. "He's got an awful thirst; almost bad as Pop's."

Momma winced, then glared. "It's none of your business what Pop's got, or hasn't got," she finally came out flat-footedly.

CHAPTER IV.

PRECISELY at 7 o'clock, Mr. Jones, sleek and smiling, entered the dining-room and took his accustomed seat. "Hey, there, you Della," he cried, "can't you bring a starving man something to eat!"

Mr. Jones was always like that; cheerful and happy, and easy to please, and polite. Needless to say, he commanded the best service in Momma's house. Della nearly broke her neck in getting out the order.

"Say, Della, what's sour-face sore about this morning?"

Della shot a lightning glance to where the "mean" boarder, as she called him, sat glowering over his breakfast, then edged closer to Mr. Jones. "He don't like the coffee," she whispered indignantly. "He called it slop; and I made it myself this morning."

"Well, well, well!" Mr. Jones patted Della's plump little hand reassuringly. "It's ain't your fault that Momma buys the kind of coffee that comes cheapest—and it's not half bad at that. He's a queer bird; I'll say that for him."

(Continued on Page 14.)

PRINCESS or ADVENTURESS?

by AUGUSTIN W. BREEDEN

Related in Opening Chapters

RICHARD HERBERT GLADNEY, a young portrait painter, accepted his wealthy cousin's invitation to join a mining expedition about to be sent to Mexico to open up an abandoned gold mine which its New York owner believed still contained a vast storage of the precious mineral. In the party engaged by

HENRY JARNDYCE, the wealthy cousin of young Gladney, were several bosses and a score of common laborers, all supplied with the proper machinery, etc., for their proposed enterprise. Chief of the party was one

PROTHRO, whose first aids were a man named Barnette, Senors Aguaros and Mora, both of Spanish blood, Mora being a midget, or very small man. Also in the party and rated considerably above the laborers were

NELSON, the engineer, whose past activities were little known;

SIFERT, believed to be a professional gambler, whose side partner was Seriano, a Mexican of doubtful character. Among the laborers was

"BATTLING" BOURKE, an ex-prizefighter, faithful, perhaps, to his employers—and perhaps not. And among the first-class passengers, supreme above them all, in her characteristic beauty, charm, and alluring manners, was

SENORA TRABAJAR, who claimed to be Princess Inez Tchacalca (with half a dozen added names), who set up the claim that the mine to be reopened had been wrongfully taken from her father before he died, and that upon her arrival in Vera Cruz she would marry the man who would deliver to her the blueprints of the mine and aid her in establishing her ownership, thereby foiling the wealthy New Yorker in his costly enterprise.

When the ship reached Vera Cruz, both Gladney and Nelson were refused permission to land, the former for an assault with a pistol, as charged, the latter because his passport was faulty and because Prothro, his chief, wanted him returned to New York. During their voyage Nelson had become almost insanely jealous of the young artist because of his desire to paint the lovely senora, or princess, and these rivals were greatly chagrined to see her go ashore with her baggage, as did the other leaders of the mining party.

This story began in No. 9, the Ledger for Feb. 26. Back copies may be obtained from our agents or newsdealers.

CHAPTER VII.

I FOUND myself detained on board ship in company with four villainous-looking workmen and Nelson, the former charged with rioting, all of us under guard. I do not think I ever gazed at land that looked more inviting.

"I will arrange for you to come ashore," Prothro whispered to me before leaving the ship. But it didn't look as tho he could. I heard later in the day—it was Nelson's chatter—that Prothro also was wanted for assault with a pistol and that the Mexican authorities objected to his landing.

I was, therefore, greatly surprised when Prothro came to my cabin a little before midnight and said: "I have arranged for us to go ashore. Watch thru the porthole for a noose from above. When it comes, fasten it around you under your arms and climb out thru the port. A boat will be awaiting you below. As soon as I'm out douse the light and get ready to vamoose."

Five minutes later I had hold of a rope and was with difficulty getting it under my arms. I had the hardest kind of time getting out of the narrow porthole; but, as soon as I was out, I was lowered away to a boat below, and in a jiffy Prothero came sliding down the rope. I imagine the kind-hearted steward was assisting, for the next minute the rope fell entire into the boat after us. There were four native rowers in the boat, but they hardly dared dip an oar into the water for fear of raising an alarm. We could hear every movement on the deck of the ship.

Nelson was up there talking to some one in a loud tone and telling what he would tell Henry Jarndyce, the millionaire, about Prothro and Barnette and Gladney when he got back to the States.

The tide was ebbing out to the north and there was the slightest puff of wind from time to time to assist it; so gradually we worked away from the ship and then our rowers set to and we made good headway up the coast.

The night was close and muggy and seemed quiet, and yet there were a great many people about. Twice we had to change our course to avoid being seen by others out in boats. When the rowers became tired, Prothro and I each took an oar, altho I could pull only with my left hand.

We landed a little before daybreak in a palm-embowered, mosquito-infested area, where no white man could live for an hour. Prothro paid off our crew, paid them very liberally with Mexican gold; and then we ran for it, Prothro leading the way and I running after him. We ran along pig trails, past swarming filthy villages of blacks and other natives. And when we could no longer run we tramped with all the speed we could make, and by forced marches reached a higher altitude about noon and fell down exhausted. Had it not been for the willingness of the native women to make us coffee and sell us enchilala and tortillas I think we should have lain there forever. That afternoon we rested and made our plans.

We bought two burros and started for the interior. Prothro gave me to understand that Barnette and Mora and our crew had stayed in Vera Cruz to superintend the unloading and reloading of the machinery. We were to meet them in Guanajuata, where the machinery would have to be reloaded upon a narrow gauge railroad for Tieximal. We made for Pachucha, about a hundred and eighty miles inland from our landing place and across the first chain of cordilleras. It was an interesting journey for me, and the tropical mountain scenery was more wonderful than anything I had ever seen.

From Pachucha we caught a fast stage coach for Mexico City. On entering Pachucha Prothro produced a couple of bogus passports and we changed our names to match the names on the papers. In Mexico City we remained only about two hours, and then proceeded by rail to Guanajuato.

I will never forget my first view of that colorful and picturesque city. It looked from the mountain pass where we first saw it like a cardboard city built up as a stage property. There were seven large churches crowning as many hills above the green and pink roofs of the clustering houses.

"Each church," instructed Prothro, "stands for a mine; and the patron saint is likewise the patron of the mine. For the most part the main shaft of the mine is in the church yard."

"Does our mine have a church above it?" I asked.

"Yes, only it's a church on the outside; or rather above ground, and a heathen temple below. Didn't the 'Princess Patchoula,' or whatever it is, describe it to you?"

"She told me a little something about it," I said. "Said she was the great granddaughter of the grand swami of the main sanctum."

"Hum; chances are she's the daughter of a chili con vendor in El Paso. But really, there is a native heir to that mine; or was, before she was disinherited—for heresy, perhaps—what do you think of this railroad?"

"Not much."

"Don't run it down; I built it. I also built the narrow-gauge road up to Tieximal and our El Dorado."

"It looks to me as if when we start down the next grade we'll go to 'ell sol me do."

"Just a little dip and then we rise to Guanajuato. Say, boy, the life there is picturesque. You'll be pleased with it. You'll want to paint it."

"Yes, I might paint it but for the fact that my brush arm is out of commission and I sacrificed my kit when we went overside," I grumbled.

We found Barnette and Mora and our gang of workmen waiting for us in Guanajuato. I recommend that town for any artist looking for a picture. Everything there is stagelike, colorful, and picturesque. There you see the old Mexican grandee and the young Mexican dandy looking just as they do in the paintings. There ladies of high degree peep at you from grilled gateways with eyes that make men forget; and the peons go in for colors of all sorts. The most curious thing is the way the ladies there paint their faces; they put the whiting on wet like white shoe polish and put it on nearly as thick. In the plazas the peons promenade in one direction and the grandees in the opposite direction, and a knight rides his horse down the sidewalk by preference if the crooked street is wide enough to have a sidewalk.

He Looked at Me From Time to Time as He Spoke, and I Thought at Times Made Angry Gestures Toward Me. I Wondered If She Had Told Them I Was Her Fiance, and If He Were Objecting to Me.

We waited two days there while the Mexican authorities refused to allow us to unload our machinery, and then Prothro and Mora traveled back to Mexico City to take the matter up with the Bureau of Transportation. Barnette and Bourke guarded the machinery and I loafed.

The first day I started over the city alone I got a surprise. I was climbing a high hill to look at a very ornate church when some one called me by name. I turned and saw our "princess" coming up the same hill on a small, shaggy pony.

CHAPTER VIII.

"ALLO, Senor Gladney," she cried delightedly as we shook hands. "Where is the Big Chief?"

"Sifert, you mean?"

"No, no, Senor Prothro."

"Gone about his affairs, I suppose.

"Where are Sifert and Seriano?"

"How should I know. I do not keep up with casual acquaintances."

"Casual acquaintances! How much did they pay you for stealing those blueprints?"

"Why do you accuse me? Nelson got the blueprints and has them yet, I suppose."

"No, Sifert has them. Listen, carissima. Let's you and me strike a bargain. How much are Sifert and his gang paying you? If it isn't too much we'll pay you more to come in with us. We need a lady to add tone to our party. All you'll have to do is to sit around a hotel and look pretty; and please do not forget that I am yet to paint your portrait—and—really, I am not as crazy about you as Nelson is—still—who knows—I am heart whole—unless—the symptoms seem to tell me that I have lost my heart to you. 'Out of sight, out of mind' has not worked with me in your case. Honestly, Senora Trabajar, let us come to a frank and free understanding. If you will do this, I promise that I will not reveal a single secret that you tell me to keep even to Prothro and Barnette. I am not in Jarndyce's employ, really, but was simply permitted to accompany the expedition as a sort of lark."

The woman was visibly flattered.

"All right," she said, smiling down at me where I clung to her pony's girth strap to get up the hill, "I'll be your sweetheart. I really didn't want those blueprints the other night half as bad

(Continued on Page 10.)

A Bird in Hand

By Artemus Calloway

PETE PAGGLEY is back again! To old readers this message will be a welcome one. In all probability they won't read the balance of this little forenote, but will plunge right in the following yarn, quite satisfied that they will receive a story well worth the reading. And so they will!

To new readers, however, a word of explanation in passing. In the Pete Paggley stories are to be found the most rollicking bits of darktown humor appearing in any magazine in the past ten years. Artemus Calloway, the author, is a native of Birmingham, Alabama; which is well south of the Mason and Dixon line as you know. Not only this, but he has spent a good bit of his life down in Tela, Honduras, where the Jamaican and American negroes work for the fruit companies that supply our breakfast tables. He knows his dialect, he knows his characters, and he lands his humor with a sure, certain delivery.

Now if you've never met Pete Paggley, as have some of the older and more fortunate Ledger readers of last year, Pete is the president, secretary, and treasurer of the Knights and Ladies of the Guiding Light, a social society composed of those who are in the very best Tela, Honduras, colored society. Aside from this position of social eminence, Pete derives his living as proprietor of the North Pole Ice Cream and Soft Drink Parlor down near the "Railroad Salume," and the Hot Iron Pressing Parlor. Pete is no spring chicken in years, but he has his little affairs of the heart with certain dusky damsels of Tela society. Certain of Tela's natives have tried time and again to "get" old Pete Paggley, but Pete has a brain as cunning as the best of them and always comes out right on top.

In Pete Paggley, his friend Kid Scoot, the prize fighter, Goodtimes Harris, the gambler, Hoghead Puckett and Goldtooth Cotton, Goodtimes' friends, Dr. Percy Shade, the light-colored Jamaican, Big Gun, the bad man and bully of Tela, and the other amusing characters of Artemus Calloway's negro stories, are to be found the most real and vivid characters finding print today in any American magazine.

The Pete Paggley stories are not a serial.

Each is complete in itself.

One will appear each week until the new set of five is finished.

They'll cost you five cents a week now.

They'll cost you two dollars when they come out in book form this summer.

FOR a brief moment the fighting, gushing, surging crowd was too excited to even gasp. A pall of silence fell over the mass of ebony humanity.

Then, suddenly a yell split the air of Honduras: A yell in which horror, amazement, disbelief, elation and distress were intermingled in one glorious fanfare.

"O-o, O-w!" howled Big Gun, "Lookit dat rooster!"

And in truth, the rooster was something to look at. It was Horseshoe who was causing the commotion: Horseshoe, the long-heralded, heavily-vaunted gamecock entry of Goodtimes Harris, who was creating Honduranean cockfighting history.

For Horseshoe had done—was doing—that which passeth the comprehension of he who is versed in the lore of fighting cocks. Horseshoe and his adversary had come together, there had been the vicious pfip! pfip! of wings, bodies and spurs; Horseshoe's precious feathers had become ruffled. . . .

With which Horseshoe had gazed about the canvas pit in surprise, rolled startled eyes, spread clipped wings—and hurdled the side of the pit in token of ignominious defeat.

No one quite understood the hows or whys. The first thing the crowd knew Horseshoe had slipped thru and was traveling down the narrow, dusty street at a pace to put chain lightning to shame. When next discovered the defeated bird was scratching gravel in a yard two blocks away with his weather eye cocked gingerly and suspiciously upon passers-by.

Goodtimes Harris had nothing to say. He was having a hard time saying it.

A voice at his elbow brought the slender young negro back to earth. "You ain't fo'gittin' dat you owes me fifty dollars an ten mo' besides, is you, Goodtimes?"

Goodtimes turned and glared at an old man fingering an aged and battered straw hat, leaving a bald and shiny head to the tender mercies of the tropical sun.

Goodtimes snorted. "Don' you come heah botherin' me 'bout no money I owes you, else I gwine knock dat little bit o' gray hair you got 'roun' de aiges an' back o' yo' haid off. Don' you pesticate me now, ol' niggah. I done got troubles o' mah own, an' I's got 'em plenty. Dat low life niggah up dah at Ceiba what sol' me dat rooster knowed he wa'nt no fighter."

"He sho' mus' not be no full blooded game chicken," consoled old Pete. "'Cause a full blood game chicken ain't never gwine run, don' make no whatsumever what happen. Dat' rooster sho' is got some gran'pa o' somethin' back dah somewhuh whut had jes' common blood in him."

"Sho' is de tru'f," put in Kid Scoot, prizefighter friend of Pete's. "I knowed all de time dat Horseshoe chicken wuz too heavy built. Da's how come I ain't bet mah money on him. Horseshoe is a good name fo' dat rooster fo' weight, but a po' one fo' luck. If'n dat's whut horseshoes does fo' you I's gwine home an' take dat one down off'n my do' right now. Nosuh, I ain't bet mah money on dat chicken."

"I bet mine on him," wailed Goodtimes mournfully.

"You means you bet mine," corrected Pete.

"I wish it wuz yo'n!" howled Goodtimes. "But I ain't havin' no luck lak'n to dat. I's got to pay dat money back."

Pete nodded. "You sho' is done spit out a mouthful, Brudder Goodtimes. You is got to pay dat money back in jes' one week fum today, else'n I's gwine turn you over to de law."

"You gwine git de money," snapped Goodtimes. "Dey ain't no use in you keepin' on 'mindin' me 'bout whut you gwine do."

Goodtimes stalked wrathfully away, leaving Pete and Kid to talk over the unexpected end of the cock fight.

"Whut dat 'bout Goodtimes owin' you money, Pete?" Kid wanted to know. "I didn't know you an' him wuz sech frien's lak dat. Seem lak to me dat if'n I wuz you after de way Goodtimes is done been treatin' you ever since he's been 'rived in Tela, I wouldn't be loanin' him no money. Fus' off he tuk an' flahed you plumb out'n yo' job when you wuz wukin' at de railroad salume an' he got to be de head barkeep. Den he tuk yo' gal 'way fum you. An' den——"

Pete interrupted. "Yeh, I knows plenty 'bout all dat. He done whut you says, an' yit mo'. An' us ain't no frien's."

Kid grunted. "How come den you done loaned him money?"

Pete grinned. "Dat's diffunt. Dat's bus'ness."

Kid sniffed. "Looks to me lak it's mighty po' bus'ness, loanin' money to Goodtimes Harris any time, knowin' whut a triflin', onreliable niggah he is. An' it's mo' foolisher jes' now dan ever since he's got so notoritus dat he can't git no job doin' nothin', an' ain't nobody whut'll trus' him fo' nothin'. How much money he owes you?"

"Fifty dollars—an' ten mo' 'sides."

"Huh! Pete Paggley, you sho' is one plumb nat'ral bawn po' fool."

"Mebbe so. An' den mebbe—no. I knows whut I's doin'. De onderstandin' wuz dat I wuz to let him have fifty dollars to bet on de fight, an' den if'n his bird winned I wuz to git back mah fifty dollars an' ten mo' 'sides."

"But Horseshoe didn't winned."

"Dat's one mo' sho' fac'. But dey wuz some mo' to de 'greement. If'n his rooster los', which he tuk an' done, Goodtimes wuz to pay me one week fum today. He's to pay me de same way—de fifty dollars I let him have an' yit ten mo' 'sides."

Kid laughed. "Lots o' good dat money gwine do you. Goodtimes jes' gwine laugh when you tries to c'lect."

Pete shrugged. "Gwine be cu'is kin' o' laughin'. I done got me a paper fum him to de 'fac dat he owe me dat money. An' you knows de law heah in Honduras is dat if'n a man owes you money an' don' pay it you kin put him in jail. An' jail is one place I'd sho' lak to see dat Goodtimes Harris."

Kid nodded. "Well, I esspect dat's whut you gwine see, 'cause dat niggah ain't never gwine see no sixty dollars no mo'. He is done busted, full an' complete."

GOODTIMES HARRIS paced up and down the little yard surrounding the dilapidated shack serving as his temporary home. Things were certainly going against him. Three American negroes who had professed friendship in the past walked rapidly away when the word loan was mentioned.

Deep in his heart, Goodtimes knew that there was sufficient reason for this, but the one-time leading sport of Tela was exceedingly bitter against the world nevertheless. Every one of those approached for a loan had at one time or another been fleeced by Goodtimes, either at the celebrated game of skin, loaded dice, framed prizefight, or something else equally exciting, and to see the ex-fashion plate up against it tickled them immensely. For with prosperity Goodtimes had worn good clothes and an air of superiority. With the coming of lean days, Goodtimes had degraded into a very ordinary-looking, sponging specimen of humanity. And his friends of the past had no idea of being the spongees.

Failing to secure the money from his supposed-to-be friends, Goodtimes had not been wholly discouraged. In addition to the American negroes in Tela, there were many black subjects of Britain's King, most of whom, like the majority of the American negroes, made good money working for the United Fruit Company. Goodtimes found the British blacks lavish with good advice, but close with money. Most of them possessed money—and they kept right on possessing it.

Horseshoe was securely fastened by a string to one of the four by four columns supporting the half-rotten veranda. Goodtimes turned and glared at the alleged fighting cock. "I don' know why I ain't done killed you," he muttered.

And then Goodtimes looked down the street and saw hope approaching—hope in the person of Jimmy Lathrop—prospector and soldier of fortune. Jimmy had money—sometimes, and Goodtimes had on one occasion done the white man a good turn, and Jimmy was not one to soon forget.

Goodtimes walked briskly to the gate. "Howdy do, Mistuh Jimmy. How is you?"

The white man stopped. "Why, hello, Goodtimes. How are you?"

Goodtimes shook his head. "I sho' aint much, Mistuh Jimmy. Hahd luck sho' is been hittin' me fas' an' frequent."

Jimmy smiled. "How's that? I thought you had hard luck bluffed to a finish."

"Nossuh, Mistuh Jimmy. Ol' Hahdtimes, he done say, 'Goodtimes, you is done reached de en' o' yo' rope, an' I's gwine put a kink in yo' bus'ness. An' by gosh, he sho' is done it."

"What's the trouble?"

Goodtimes felt better. Here was some one who actually wanted to hear about his troubles. This sounded like money.

Goodtimes braced himself for a soul-touching tale of woe. "You see, it's lak'n to dis, Mistuh Jimmy. I aint been doin' ve'y well lately. De kyards is been runnin' right fo' de other feller. An' I been in kind o' bad wid de niggahs 'roun' heah. I's got too much brains fo' dem an' dey's jealous. Mos' o' dese yeah niggahs makes good money wukin', an' I's been gittin' bah sheer o' it by not wukin'. Den luck went back on me. 'Sides dat, dey all got kind o' 'spicious dat I aint prezac'ly hones'. Den I 'cided to go down to Ceiba. Down dah I didn't fin' much doin', an' 'cided to come back heah. Right den mah luck changed—it got wuss. See dat sorry, low down rooster, dah?"

Jimmy turned and looked at Horseshoe. "Yes. What about him?"

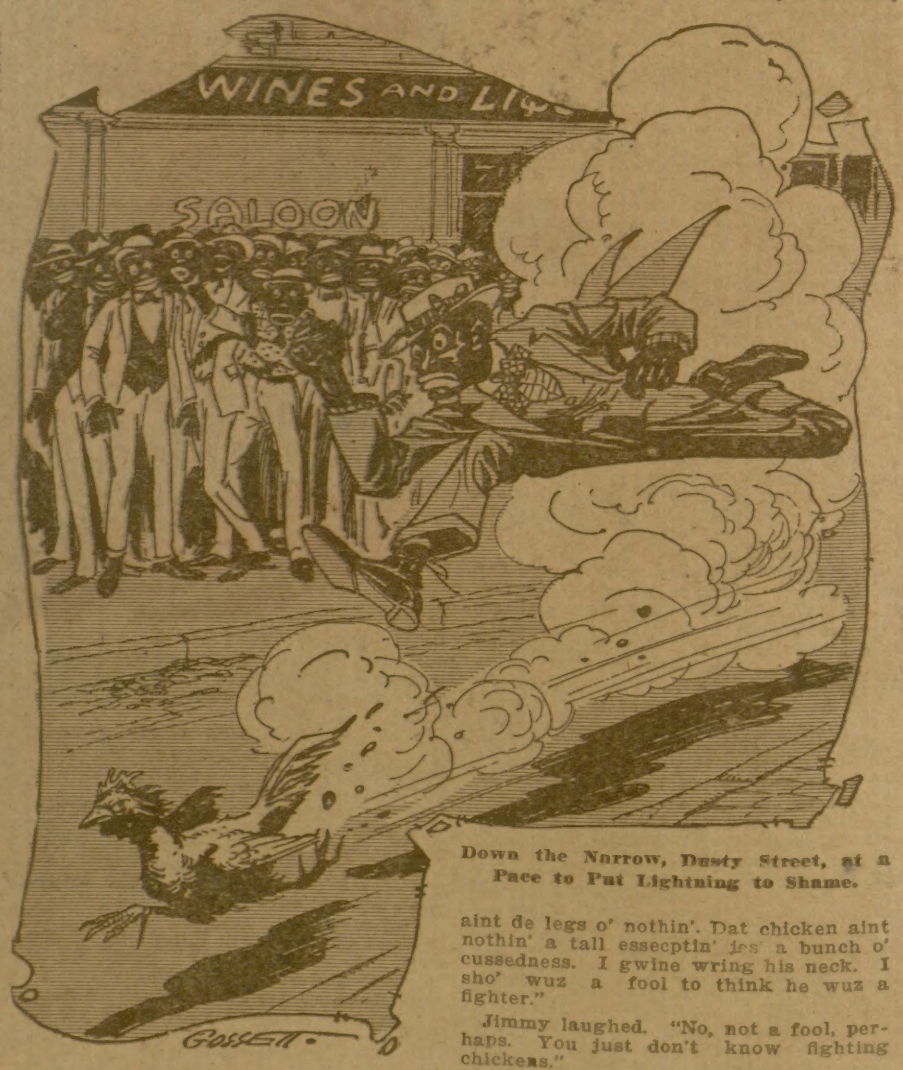
Goodtimes sniffed. "Niggah down dah at Ceiba sol' him to me fo' a fus' class fightin' rooster."

Jimmy Lathrop shook his head slowly. "Huh! You got stung, Goodtimes."

Goodtimes nodded. "You sho' is done spit out de tru'f, Mistuh Jimmy. I got stung fo' ways fum Sunday. But how 'you knows he aint no good? You aint seen him fight."

Jimmy nodded. "N-o-o. I haven't seen him fight. But, you see, Goodtimes, I know a deal about fighting cocks. I can understand how you were deceived. Any one who doesn't know much about fighting birds would think that one all right. But I can tell by his head—and by his legs. Somewhere back on his family tree your bird had a common barnyard ancestor. That blood makes a coward of him. He won't stand up and fight."

Goodtimes grinned mournfully. "He sho' won' stan' up an' fight. He won' stan' up an' do nothin'. Dem laigs o' his'n is jes' good to run 'way wid. Dey aint de legs o' nothin'. Dat chicken aint nothin' a tall esseeptin' jes' a bunch o' cussedness. I gwine wring his neck. I sho' wuz a fool to think he wuz a fighter."



Down the Narrow, Dusty Street, at a Pace to Put Lightning to Shame.

Jimmy laughed. "No, not a fool, perhaps. You just don't know fighting chickens."

"You knows fightin' chickens real well, don' you, Mistuh Jimmy?"

"Yes. I have a fine bird up at the hotel now. He's an imported bird. Never been in a fight, but he's got the blood in him. Soon as I come back up here I'm going to win some money on him. There's going to be a big cocking main here in about six weeks. A number of the government officials from Ceiba and Cortez will be here. Those fellows bet big money. The little fights

you fellows have are nothing compared to those scraps."

"Dat sho' is de tru'f. An' you's gwine somewhuh now?"

"Yes. Down the coast to look into a little mining prospect I have my eyes on."

Goodtimes thought it time to talk business. "Now, I aint tol' you all mah troubles, Mistum Jimmy. I's jes' tol' you de commencements. I brought dat fool chicken down hear an' touted him up a little an' entered him in a fight. I ain't had no money to bet an' borrowed fifty dollars fum Pete Paggley. You knows Pete—calls hisse'f Slav'ey Time Pete—been down heah in Honduras since befo' anybody kin riccilect. Come fum somewhuh in de States."

Jimmy nodded. "Yes, I know him."

"Well, suh, dat fool bird done tuk an' runned out'n de pit, an' I los'. Now if'n I don't pay Pete dat fifty dollars an' ten mo 'sides by nex' Chuesday, he gwine have me put in jail. I b'lieves now dat's why de ol' rascal let me have de money. He aint never liked me."

Jimmy nodded. "You and Pete have had considerable trouble, haven't you?"

Goodtimes grunted. "Ain't never had nothin' 'ceptin' trouble, an' it looks now lak it's jes' beginnin' to commence. Whut I wan's to know, Mistuh Jimmy, is can't you len' me de money to pay Pete?"

Jimmy shook his head. "Really, I'm sorry, Goodtimes. I'd like to let you have it. But I can't. I'm broke. When I get back here I expect to get a little money from a man who has promised to back my mining proposition, and——"

Goodtimes interrupted. "When you gits back heah, I's gwine be aint. I knows whut dem natives does to a niggah when dey gits him in jail."

But there was no use talking. Jimmy Lathrop didn't have the money. Goodtimes felt sure of this, knowing that Lathrop was not the man to forget a favor.

There was a long silence. Finally the white man spoke. "I'm sorry I can't help you, Goodtimes. But you'll get the money somewhere. Now, you can do something for me if you will."

"Sho' be glad to do it, Mistuh Jimmy. Whut it is?"

"I want you to keep that game cock of mine I was telling you about. And I don't want any one to know about him."

The negro's eyes sparkled with joyful acquiescence. Already in Goodtimes' brain an idea was beginning to prepare to begin. "You kin' trus' me, Mistah Jimmy. Le's go git dat bird."

THE atmosphere of the Railroad saloon was surcharged with expectancy. A dozen negroes crowded around to hear Big Gun's oration. "Lemme tell you, Goodtimes, 'tain't no use fo' you to come 'roun' botherin' me 'bout loanin' you no money. I aint gwine do it. I aint lakin' dat ol' niggah Pete, but I hopes he puts you in jail an' keeps you dah. Git out'n disyeah salume an' keep out whilst I's heah. De Railroad salume is a place fo' gen'muns to congregate, not fo' niggahs whut wan's to borry money fum gen'muns whut dey's double-crossed much as you is ev'ybody 'roun' heah."

"Big Gun is correct." Goodtimes turned to face the speaker and beheld Dr. Percy Shade, a yellow negro from Kingston, Jamaica, who boasted quite a heavy practice among Tela's colored population. Dr. Shade's perfect English, wholly unlike the Cockney dialect spoken by most Jamaicans of color, got on Goodtimes' already heavily burdened nerves, but he was in no position to voice his true feeling in the matter.

Despite his dislike for Dr. Shade, Goodtimes stood somewhat in awe of the yellow-skinned one. He felt that he must make some reply. He made it. "Yassuh, Doctah. You sho' is right."

Shade laughed. "I'd advise you to run along."

Goodtimes heard some one behind him chuckle. Turning, he beheld Pete. Pete opened, conducted and closed the conversation which followed. "I jes' wan's to remind you, Goodtimes, dat de time is slippin' away. You better git a move on if'n you's gwine git dat money up an' keep out o' jail. Sixty dollars is a lot o'money, but I'd give it to see you git whut's comin' to you.

Goodtimes opened his mouth, but no words issued therefrom. What was the use? Pete had him on the hip and was not going to relinquish his grip. Goodtimes shuffled hopelessly from the saloon.

Out in the street, Goodtimes paused for a moment, apparently lost in thought. Then he strolled along the narrow brick and bottle-strewn thorofare to his home. Horseshoe crowed just as Goodtimes entered the gate. "Shet oy' fool mouth, ol' chicken. You may be de cause o' me gwine to jail, but I sho' gwine eat you befo' I goes."

Then Goodtimes stopped suddenly in his tracks. He had an idea. Slowly his face expanded into a broad smile. After a little he again entered the street and followed it to Hoghead Puckett's house. Hoghead was at home, but not overly glad to see Goodtimes. He, however, was hospitable enough to offer the fallen sport a chair.

"Hoghead," said Goodtimes, "I is got a scheme by which me an' you kin clean up some money."

Hoghead grunted. "Ev'ybody is laughin' 'bout yo' schemes now. I heah dey's 'bout to lan' you in jail."

Goodtimes frowned. "Dis one is gwine lan' some money in us's pockets. Now listen to dis . . ."

Hoghead listened long and patiently. When Goodtimes had finished, Hoghead held up a protesting hand. "Dat lis'ens mighty good. Also does all yo' other schemes. But us aint gwine resk mah money on it. I got some money an' I's gwine keep it. I aint countin' much on yo' 'pinion on chickens."

Goodtimes forced a smile. "Dis aint mah 'pinion. It's somebody else's. Now dey's gwine be a fight dis evenin'. We gwine enter dat chicken. You lemme have five dollars to resk if'n you's 'fraid I's wrong. Den you gwine see whut'll happen. Den us gwine be ready fo' de big clean up."

Goodtimes was a good persuader, so good in fact that when the main opened that afternoon, he and Hoghead were on hand. Goodtimes held a red fighting cock under his right arm.

Big Gun laughed. "Dah's Goodtimes ag'in wid dat ol' Horseshoe chicken o' his'n."

"Fixin' to have fried chicken, Goodtimes?" Pete asked. "If'n you is dis sho' is one good place to bring him to git him killed. But he sho' gwine be mighty tough eatin'."

"I'se Satisfied," Said Pete.

Goodtimes grinned. "You niggahs is de ones whut gwine fin' him tough eatin'. Dis is some winnin' bird when he gits gwine good."

Kid Scoot roared. "Yeh! When dat ol' rooster gits gwine good he aint gwine stop till he gits plumb out o' town."

Goodtimes had no trouble in entering his bird, it being a free for all main, and with but little ceremony attached. The owner of the opposing bird laughed as Goodtimes stepped into the pit. "How much you bettin'?"

"Jes' on'y five dollars."

The other man laughed. "All right. Five dollars aint much, but I might jes' as well let mah bird kill dat ol' hen o' yours as fo' you to have to do it yo'se'f."

But the cockfighting enthusiasts were due for a second surprise in connection with Goodtimes' entry. Eighteen seconds after the two birds were loosened by their handlers there was a dead bird in the pit.

Goodtimes yelled. "Who said mah bird couldn't fight? He done killed dat other ol' chicken. Whose bird is a ol' hen now? Mistuh Stakeholder, gimme de money."

The negroes stared. They could scarcely believe their eyes.

"Horseshoe sho' is done come back!" yelled Big Gun.

Goodtimes laughed. "He aint been goen yit. He jist wa'nt use to de town de other day. Jes' you niggahs keep yo' eyes on Horseshoe. He's gwine cause a commotion heah yit."

Curiosity led Pete up by Goodtimes' house. Goodtimes and Hoghead were sitting on the front steps, gazing at Horseshoe, staked near by, neither of them saying a word. Pete stood, half hanging over the fence, looking at the bird. Finally he spoke. "Dat bird sho' did exprise dem niggahs scan'lous, Goodtimes."

"Huh! Guess he did. He aint 'sprised me none."

After a moment Pete let out a feeler. "Reckon you don' want to sell him, does you?"

Goodtimes laughed. Pete had swallowed hook, line and sinker. "Now looky heah, Pete. I jes' been raggin' you 'bout dat chicken. I thought you had mo' sense'n dat. I wouldn't cheat you by sellin' you dat ol' bird. Co'se he winned de fight dis a'ternoon, but dat wuz jes' a happen so. He aint no good. You done seed all de fightin' he kin do. Nex' time he's li'ble to run clear to Ceiba befo' he stops."

Pete looked at Goodtimes for a few seconds. Then he looked at the rooster. "Dat's all right, 'bout dat. You let me have dat chicken, an' us gwine call what you owes me square."

Goodtimes whistled. "Sixty dollahs fo' a no' 'count chicken?"

Pete grinned. "Co'se taint many chickens wuff dat much money, but I's got mah doubts 'bout ever gittin' dat money fum you, an' whut good is it gwine do me to put you in jail? Somethin' is better'n nothin' 'tall."

Goodtimes hesitated. "We-e-e-ll, I expose it's all right. If'n you's boun' to git stung, 'taint mah fault. But 'member, I done tol' you dat chicken aint no good."

Pete laughed. "Dis is de onliest fightin' chicken you's got, aint he?"

"Huh? Yeh. He's de onliest one I's got. An' he's too much."

Pete nodded. "I'se satisfied. Gimme de chicken. Heahs de paper fo' what you borrowed fum me."

Goodtimes and Hoghead watched Pete out of sight. Then they walked around the house to a little lean-to where a red game cock was pecking at a clump of grass. Goodtimes examined the string by which the chicken was tied. "Don' want him gittin' loose an' messin' things up," he muttered.

Meantime, old Pete was walking briskly along, his newly acquired bird under one arm. Two blocks from Goodtimes' house, Pete met Kid Scoot.

Kid was curious. "Whose rooster?"

Pete grinned. "Mine. Jes' bought him fum Goodtimes Harris. 'Clared even wid him on dat money he owed me. Now I gwine clean up in a fight tomorrow."

Kid swore. "You sho' is one plumb fool. I aint carin' whut you an' Big Gun an' all de res' o' dem niggahs is sayin' 'bout whut a fighter dat chicken is. A bird what'll run one time, is gwine run ag'in. You can't pen' on a rooster whut'll jes' fight on'y sometimes. De ve'y time yo' money is up on him is de ve'y sometime he's gwine take it in his haid dat it aint a good day fo' fightin' nohow."

"Mebbe not. Come go 'long wid me whilest I puts dis bird up."

Every negro in Tela was at the main. Some them were a trifle late in getting there, as was the case with Goodtimes Harris and Hoghead Pucket, but they were there.

The pit was located under the spreading boughs of a huge mango tree, and every inch of available space in the protecting shade was taken. Dozens of less fortunate fans hovered on the outer edges in the pitiless sun.

A lazy iguana climbed half way to the top of a nearby palm and stopped, as if he, too, were seeking a point of vantage from which to view the fray.

Pete's bird, Horseshoe, was well advertised by his two fights since arriving in Tela. The only trouble appeared to lay in the fact that every one wanted to place his money on Horseshoe in whatever fight he might be entered.

And then Dr. Percy Shade started something. "I'd like to know what bird is entered against Horseshoe."

Goodtimes Harris grinned. "I got a bird. Bring dat bird heah, Hoghead."

Pete's old back straightened. "I thought you didn't have nary other bird, esceptin' dat'n you sol' me."

Goodtimes laughed. "I's on'y recent got dis'n. An' I's cravin' to git action on him 'ginst Horseshoe. You knows whut I done said 'bout dat Horseshoe. Sometimes he fights an' sometimes he don'. Jes' 'member dat after de fight."

Big Gun laughed. "You's tryin' to bluff somebody. Sumthin' wuz done ail dat bird de fus' off, an' he done got over dat. Any bird whut handle hisse'f lak'n to whut Horseshoe done in dat las' fight is de bird whut mah money is gwine be on."

Dr. Shade was examining Goodtimes' bird. "What's the name of this bird?"

Goodtimes stroked the red gamecock gently with his hand before replying. "His name is Lightnin', an' da's jes' whut he is."

"I believe he is," replied Shade. "I'd like to take a few bets. My money is on Lightning."

Dr. Shade got the bets. Goodtimes Harris chanced twenty-five dollars on his entry. Hoghead Pucket was busy taking bets right and left.

Pete placed a bet of twenty-five dollars with Dr. Shade. Kid Scoot looked long and carefully at Horseshoe. Then he took a good look at Lightning. "Bofe birds looks good," said he. "Horseshoe winned a mighty good fight heah, de other day. Dey looks so much alike dey aint much to chuse fum so fur as looks goes. Do' Horseshoe 'pears to be a little mo' heavy dan whut Lightnin' is. I gwine bet you twenty-five dollars on Horseshoe, Doctah Shade."

"I'll take it."

Goldtooth Cotton, prizefight promoter, laughed. "You's showin' de bes' jedgment you is ever done befo', Kid. Dat's de bird me an' Big Gun is bettin' on."

"Yeh," said Big Gun. "I aint got no use fo' ol' man Pete, but I sho' is lakin' his rooster. Dat's de bird whut's gwine bring in de money."

Pete frowned. He knew that Big Gun didn't like him. He knew that he didn't like Big Gun. Nor did he love Goldtooth Cotton. Time had been when Big Gun, Goldtooth and Goodtimes had formed a partnership and this partnership had done much to disturb Pete's frame of mind. He hated to see these negroes win money because of anything he did.

Pete was brought to earth by the voice of Goodtimes. "Looky heah, Pete. Dese is our birds, an' us aint bet no money wid one 'nother. I done fo'got 'bout dat. I wan's a bet wid you."

Pete laughed. "I's jes' got ten mo' dollars lef'. I'll bet dat wid you."

Goodtimes covered the bet. And then the fight was on.

Lightning demonstrated 'the moment that Goodtimes loosened his hold that he was out for blood. With head thrust slightly forward the trim bird advanced to meet the foe.

Every negro about the pit was silent. A pin dropping would have sounded like a pistol shot. Then Lightning struck.

Horseshoe gave one surprised look as he clumsily dodged the other bird's blow. Before he had time to do any further looking, Lightning gave him a glancing blow on the tip of the right wing.

And then, as on a former occasion, Horseshoe added to Honduranean cock fighting history. He gave one long, surprised squawk, took a running jump, cleared the canvas inclosure, and before any one could stop him was half a block away and still accelerating.

Goodtimes yelled. "Whut you thinks o' Horseshoe now, Pete?"

Pete's face was a study in blankness. Without a word he turned away.

TWO blocks from the pit, Goodtimes overtook Pete. "Well, ol' man," said Goodtimes. "I sho' put it over on you dat time, didn't I?"

Pete grinned. For a moment he made no reply. Then: "Howcome dat?"

Goodtimes laughed loudly. "'Bout dat Horseshoe chicken."

Pete shook his head slowly. You sho' is one mo' fool, Goodtimes. Don' you know dat I knows chickens? Don' you know dat I knowed all de time dat rooster in de secon' fight wa'nt Horseshoe? Don' I know dat wuz Lightnin'? Co'se I does."

Goodtimes stared at the ground thoughtfully. He removed a finely

(Concluded on Page 9.)

The Heart of Gingold

By J. Bryan Dickinson

This is one of a series of five amusing stories appearing a week apart and each complete in itself, so that you don't have to read the others to enjoy this one. Each one presents the exploit of a "detekative" by the name of Gingold. Here is a clever and adroit burlesque on the world-famous detective character, Sherlock Holmes; here is humor with a new tang; romance just extravagant enough and ridiculous enough to provide a new flavor in mystery fiction. Another Gingold story next week.

THERE is something bewildering in the infallibility of Hugh Clueson Gingold's nose for crime. Recently we were walking along a serene side street when he stopped and pointed to the hotel across from us.

"Walter," said he, without a trace of excitement in his voice, "I am beset with the belief that butchery has been perpetrated in yonder hotel."

I looked. It was a neat, conservative, three-story stone building, quiet and cheerful in the early morning, inanimation. There was not an iota of evidence to lend color to his astounding statement.

Without another word he crossed the street, entered the hotel door, and briskly made his way to the counter. A gentleman who looked like a moving picture version of a Spaniard dozed behind the register.

"Pardon me, boy," he told the sleep-doped one, "but I desire to look into the room directly above us—second floor." Modestly my friend displayed his city detective badge.

The clerk's eyes popped completely open in an instant. He felt reasuringly for his hair, which was curled as painfully as a Greek waiter's. "Certainly, sir!" came his ingratiating response. No one was astir in the hotel. The clerk himself escorted us to the room immediately overhead.

The smart rap the detective gave the door failed to bring a response. The master crime hound tried the second time, and the third, and the fourth. Then he pulled from his pocket a bunch of keys, and a hairpin. The keys failed to turn the trick; but he had the door open in four seconds with the hairpin.

The clerk, the sleuth and I entered.

One quick glance about the small room served to prove Hugh Clueson Gingold correct to the last ghastly detail. In the middle of the room a pale-faced young man in the uniform of an Army second lieutenant had crumpled up and spilled his last drop of blood on the rug! From his chest protruded the rough handle of a jack-knife.

"Boy," commanded the unamazed sleuth, "notify police headquarters!"

The dark young man who presided at the desk seemed glad to leave that grewsome scene.

"Say," I gasped, astonished, "how'd you know of this?"

"Exceedingly simple," observed my friend, "I saw the window curtain pulled down. When a hotel guest pulls down the curtain there is always something wrong. Usually they prefer that outsiders view them as they sleep. Everybody except fat women. I was safe in guessing that it was murder."

"Not so fast," I feigned doubt of my gifted associate, "for does not this deed bear some of the earmarks of suicide?"

"Your ability to size up a crime," he replied, "is but a trifle above that of the crude police. Any gentleman of ordinary discernment would know instantly that this is thoro, deliberate and hostile murder."

"How'd the slayer get out of the room?" I was fain to inquire.

"He had the occupant's key, did he not?" demanded Gingold. "One as dull as you might well raise the puzzle as to how I got in." The crime hound winked pleasantly. A smirk was on his lean features. "This man was a fake," he pronounced, his acidity all gone. "He was no Army officer."

"Perhaps not," I granted, gladly. "He just wore the uniform."

"I didn't mean it that way," came the tactful reply, "altho I doubt not there is considerably more of the well-known truth in your thought than you ever said in plain words. But at this late date there is no longer glory to be obtained in the garments of an Army officer. I wonder what this bird's game was?"

"Maybe he lost his pull and failed to get out as easily as he got in," I suggested.

"That can't be possible, for this deceptive gentleman was never in the Army, either as an officer or as a buck private." My friend was positive in his remark.

"Why credit him with draft-dodging genius?" I demanded.

"For," stated the acknowledged star of the city detective department, "if he had ever been in the Army he would be wearing a Sam Brown belt. How many officers have you seen without them? One of this gentleman's shoulder insignia is missing. No real Army officer would ever be seen abroad without those two items, Wrightsit."

"What reason would cause a man to pose falsely as an Army officer?" I asked, a bit doubtful of his usual infallibility.

"Pressed for an immediate reply," the great gentleman said, "I'd say offhand a direct hit by that god of misery the world flatteringly calls Cupid. His motive was love, the same as any other act of folly."

"But," said I, "if that was his reason he should have donned the uniform of a sailor. When it comes to increasing the female heart thud one big-necked gob is more effective by six beats per second than a regiment of second lieutenants."

"Very true," admitted Gingold. "You and I know that. But this gentleman didn't. That's the other reason why I say he was never in the Army. Since the home girls have wised up a second lieutenant is no more popular with them than a commanding officer at a crap game."

"That leads nowhere," I stuck in. "Who killed him?"

"Don't overdo your interrogative prerogative," admonished my slippery companion. "I can't walk in on a strange cadaver and tell offhand the full name of the murderer. If I can establish the identity of the girl he loved it may shed some interesting light on the home life of the real culprit."

"Perhaps a search—" I began.

But the alert crime fiend had already started a thoro investigation of the corpse's pockets.

AFTER he had gone completely into every pocket on the garments without finding a single scrap of identifying evidence he unbuttoned the coat and felt in a little sewed-on receptacle over the heart. From there he brought forth a picture.

"This gentleman could hardly be a movie actor," puzzled the great detective, "yet I labored under the belief that no other brand of human donkey kept the picture of a sweetheart over his heart. If he were not an actor, he certainly must admire one."

Under our observation the picture proved to be the likeness of a tall, slim, gangling girl with a simple countenance. Her eyes were so dull they blurred the print. She had teeth like a rat's. The The two hands that dangled at the ends of her raw-boned arms might well have served as sand bags to hang on an observation balloon.

"Irrefutable proof of the dead man's complete asininity," the city sleuth remarked. "Only the employer of a stenographer could love that misshapen face."

There came a noise out in the corridor and he quickly put the photograph in his pocket. Into the room came three policemen and a plainclothes man from the detective force. The latter looked at Hugh Clueson Gingold with considerable animosity.

"What are you doing here, Gingold?" he snarled. "Trying to ferret out something, eh? Stealing a march on me? Better run along. I'll handle this case. I fail to need the aid of the eminent Mr. Gingold."

Hugh Clueson Gingold was hurt. I saw his thin ears wiggle in anger. "William," he reproved, "that was not in demand. I was but remaining to give you a little assistance. I intended to write 'No clews could be found' for you. They say you have written that weak excuse so often your fingers are numb."

"I Know a Place—Twenty Dollars a Quart!" Gingold Told Him.

He motioned for me to follow and hastened from the room. Out on the stairs he mentioned that the city ought to furnish such men as William a rubber stamp with the statement "NO CLEWS" on it in capital letters.

"Too bad those boneheads bungled the case," I mentioned.

"It is always to be deplored," he muttered, "when a civic government trusts its upkeep to such specimen of weak-eyed manhood as William Watt. But, fortuntely, he did not spoil the case. I will have to do a bit more work now to line up the criminal than I would have had those choice fatheads not interrupted me. But I'm paid to work, Wrightsit."

We walked rapidly down the side street to where it crossed Bypath avenue. Up that commercial thorofare we strode until we came to the Abe Wilson Building. My astute associate plainly knew where he wanted to go, but as plainly did not want me to know.

The elevator disgorged us on the third floor. Hugh Clueson Gingold directed our steps to room 319. The door of that room was lettered: "Super-Art Moving Picture School."

Nor did he hesitate until he had pushed his way into the manager's office. That glabrous gentleman wheeled about in his chair and grinned. It was the same sort of smile the insurance underwriter wears when he mentions that death may overtake any man in one brief second.

"You want to become a movie star?" he stated as a positive and irrevocable truth.

"No," replied Gingold. "We seek information."

"So!" exclaimed the bald man, with an upward sweep of his bushy eye-brows. "All right. Proceed. I have not crossed any of the State or Federal laws. My attorney passes every move I plan."

"Not that, this time," grinned Gingold. He took the picture he had secured from the dead man from his pocket. "Does this girl attend your school?"

The manager studied it a second or two. "Yes," he admitted. "What about her?"

"I desire a word with her," uttered the oily sleuth.

The manager arose and walked to a door directly to his right. He put his head thru it and yelled something. Presently the original of the photograph came striding in, in all of her maidenly unloveliness.

Hugh Clueson Gingold curtly bade her follow him, and led her out in the hall.

"Gladys," said he, "do you know an Army officer?"

"I know a man who wears officer's clothes," she responded. "My name is Edith."

"Edith," persued the great man, "what makes you doubt the authenticity of his garments?"

"My friend Thomas Fentley told me he was a fake," she said. "He was a buck private. He knows."

"Where can I find him?" the sleuth desired to know.

"Who—Fentley, or the Army officer?"

"Fentley, of course. He and I rolled the bones in the same crap game at Chateau Thierry," replied the detective.

"You'll find Fentley out at the Cascade Grocery Store," she informed him.

"Thanks," replied Gingold. He headed for the elevator and nodded briskly for me to follow.

"Pretty cute," I admitted. "How'd you know where to find the girl?"

"All girls of her type usually can be found at an acting school," said he. "Let us go pick up the slayer."

THIRTY minutes later we had Thomas Fentley pointed out to us at the Cascade Grocery. He was juggling canned soup, weighing his hand, and substituting unknown products for well-advertised brands as handily as any other efficient grocery clerk.

The wily sleuth strolled over to where he was. An eight-cent cigar was forced into Mr. Fentley's mouth. "Tom, old boy," Gingold gushed, ingratiatingly, "don't you remember your old side-kick—William Dumb?"

"Never saw you before," denied Mr. Fentley.

"Perhaps there is a mistake," the sleuth muttered, gazing keenly at the clerk. "But we served in the same Army together, at any rate. Could you tell a guy where there is liquid with a kick to it?" My great friend is horribly low-browed when he so feigns.

"N-o-o," the interested gentleman returned. "Not just—now."

"I know a place. Twenty dollars a quart!"

"Take me there, brother," came the eager reply. He tossed his apron on the counter. "Be back soon," he hastily informed the manager. Then he followed us out to the street.

Hugh Clueson Gingold was as good as his word. Twenty minutes later the three of us were seated in Fentley's room, and on the table sat a quart bottle about half empty. The detective was ostensibly stewed. Thomas Fentley was sufficiently hazy to be trapped.

"I got me some sweet revenge this morning," bragged the great deductologist. "Beat the head off an Army officer."

"That's nothing," depreciated the grocery clerk. "Hope you don't weaken the word 'revenge' that way. When I put a man's lights out, I call that 'revenge'."

"My own idea," confessed Gingold.

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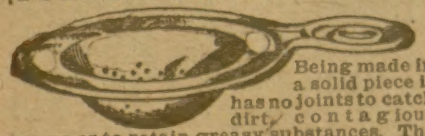

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"Let's go find an officer. I desire to whittle on him."

"I've already fixed one bird's clock today," admitted Fentley. "Fake Army officer, I think."

"What?" the sleuth feigned deeper intoxication.

"Kid-faced faker," explained Thomas. "Playing my girl. Wore second lieut. clothes. Trying to fool Edith—but I fixed him." In his unsober glee he even desired to embellish the awful details.

"You don't seem to like army officers," I added.

"Putting it that way is weakening to my true sentiments," the ex-doughboy confessed. "I'll say I don't! Ever since Second Lieutenant Beasley gave me a bawling out for walking down the ocean front with a French chicken at Saint Nazaire I haven't favored the Army officers."

"You wouldn't hold that against all of them?" I questioned.

"Not that," retorted Fentley, "but when I got ten days on kitchen police for flirting under the cognizance of Colonel Ball, I made a little vow I'd start something with the next officer that got in my way. I did, you bet."

"So you made good your vow?" questioned the wily detective, somewhat sobered.

"I'll say I made it good!" responded the clerk. "I went up to his room with him in the Like Home Hotel. It was not like the last meeting I had with an Army officer. I had things all my own way, believe me."

Hugh Clueson Gingold nodded approval.

"I took him by the neck," proclaimed the ex-warrior, "and I unsettled his whole system with a few hand-made electric currents of high voltage. He whined and begged. But he was afraid to howl for aid. Guess he didn't court investigation."

"You didn't let him get away with that mild stuff?" The sleuth sounded carnest enough.

"I'll say no!" snarled the clerk, harshly. "After I had made life miserable for him, I took out my trusty jack-knife and jammed it clean into his heart. I took his key and beat it, after I had removed all evidence."

My talented companion lost his intoxication immediately. The information he sought was his.

"Fentley," I said, sadly, to open the way for my companion, "you have been talking to a detective. Mr. Gingold is a city detective."

The ex-doughboy himself made no mean record in the quick sobering process. At the melancholy sleuth he gazed with something akin to loathing. "So that's your game?" he asked, and his disgust was deep and biting. "That's how you work, eh?"

"Fentley," the broken voice of the clever criminologist was stirring, "it is my duty to arrest you. I am sorry, too. I know your feelings. I myself fared no better at the hands of Army officers. But we can't afford to carry our war-time grudges into the future."

"Well," snarled Thomas Fentley, defiantly, "pinch me, you cur!"

Hugh Clueson Gingold looked at me. I looked away. The zest had all been snatched from the game.

"I can't bring myself to do it, Fentley," spoke Gingold. "You deserve it, but I have already forgotten your confession. Shake. I'll forgive you. I did thirty days in the guardhouse myself for accidentally winking at the Colonel's wife."

I am convinced, more than ever, that my friend is the greatest detective on earth.

Next Week: the end of the Gingold Series.

"OLD STYLE MURDER"

GINGOLD AT HIS BEST.

A Bird in Hand

(Continued From Page 7)

woven Panama hat and scratched his head slowly. "But I aint understandin'. I winned de bets I made. An' Hoghead Pucket was bettin' fo' me an' him on a ha'f an' ha'f basis, an' I got mo'n a hund'ed dollars out'n Big Gun an' Goldtooth."

Pete shook his head sadly. "Dat's all whut worries me, Goodtimes. I hates to see a trickster win. It 'courages you to buck up ag'in mens lak me, an' when you does"—Pete shook his head again. "When you does, I jes' nach'ly has to out-trick you."

Goodtimes stared. "But I ain't seein' how. You bet on Horseshoe. An' yo' frien' Kid Scoot bet on Horseshoe. An'——"

Pete held up a hand. "You's gwine too fas'. All de money Kid Scoot bet on Horseshoe was wid Doctoh Shade. All de money I bet on Horseshoe was wid Doctah Shade, escusin' de little bet wid you, an' dat wuz fo' blindin' purposes."

Goodtimes groaned in perplexity. "Mebbe so. But Doctah Shade was bettin' on Lightnin'. An' Lightnin' winned."

Pete laughed. A laugh of pure, unadulterated joy. "'Cose Lightnin' winned. An' dem bets me an' Kid had wid Doctah Shade was blin's. Us got dat money back. An' us got a nice roll 'sides dat. De time had done came fo' me an' Kid to clean up wid Big Gun an' Goldtooth, an——"

Pete paused abruptly. Presently he nodded sagely. "By usin' mah brains an' yo' rascumcality us sho' Lawd picked dem two niggahs clean. Y'see, dey wuz bettin' on Horseshoe, an' Doctah Shade was bettin' mine an' Kid's money fo' us on Lightnin'."

Next Week:
Pete Paggley again in "A Band There Was"

A Hand From the Grave

A CORNISHMAN in America was in discussion with a Yankee. Each was upholding the good points of his native town.

"I've been a great traveler in my time," said the Cornishman.

"Yep," returned the Yank.

"On one occasion," continued the Cornishman, "on returning to my home after an absence of twenty years, the first thought that struck me was that I would go into the cemetery on my way from the station to the road in which I live and see who had passed away during my absence."

"Yep!" again asserted the Yank, shifting his chewing gum from the right side of his mouth to the left.

"No sooner had I got inside the gates," went on the Cornishman, "than a hand shot up out of one of the graves and gripped my hand so heartily that it gave me a turn. It was the hand of an old acquaintance of mine."

"Don't try to spring such a tall one on me," answered the Yank, cynically. "I'm not swallowing that yarn."

"It's perfectly true," affirmed the Cornishman. "But I ought to add that it was the hand of the old sexton, who was engaged at the time of my entry in digging a grave and didn't trouble to get out of the hole."

* * *

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A VILLAGE school teacher recently received the following note from the mother of one of the school children:

"Deer teecher—U wrote me about whipping willie.

"I hereby give you permishion to smak him enny time yu think it is necessary to learn him his leshun.

"Willie is jest like his father. Yu havter lern him wiv a belt. Pleas pound nollege into willie, for I want him to get it, and don't pay no attenshun to whot his father says. Ile handel him. Yours fayfully. ELIZA JEWEL"

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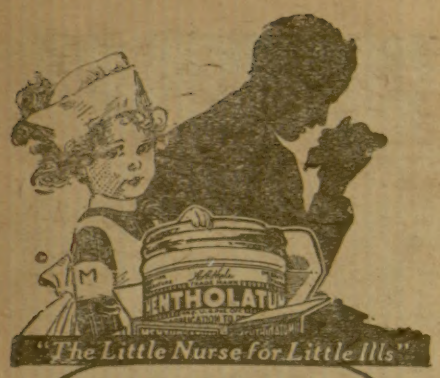

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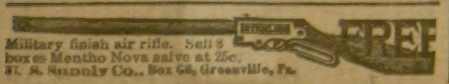

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Princess or Adventuress

(Continued From Page 5)

as I wanted—just you. There would never have been a scramble for them if Nelson hadn't acted as he did."

"Then—you love me?"

"I love you, Senor Gladney, like— I know now I have never loved before. This—is—my—first—love." Tears sprang to her large, brilliant eyes. I wondered if she were sincere or if this were a piece of superb acting. My artist eye told me at that moment that she was really beautiful; and she could not be more than 27. The color slowly mounted beneath the olive of her skin and made her very entrancing.

"Listen, then, carissima," I said. "I love you as well as you do me. If you will tell me who your fourth party is, your go-between who organized the mischief among our workmen, I'll marry you the day we apprehend him."

She flushed a coppery pink from angry pride.

"So? You wish me to bribe you to marry me. Is it thus the Yankee wooes? You forget that I am the Princess Tchacalca del Tieximal y Guanajuato y Para."

"Pardonnez moi ma Princess, but honestly it is difficult for me to believe you are anything but a very lovely adventuress."

"Could you be convinced if I showed you the proof?"

"It is according to what the proof consists of."

"The proof shall be positive."

"Then I shall have to be convinced."

"Let us go to the Church of St. Ynez yonder and look at the pictures and statuary," she said lightly, as if changing the subject.

Five minutes later we had entered a church half a millenium in age. I noted as we entered that the beautiful creature was flushed with excitement and that she kept casting odd, puzzling glances toward me.

"You walk with a prouder step here in this old sanctuary," I remarked. "Why is that?"

"It was built by my forefathers," she said. "This is the Church of Saint Ynez Tchacalca del Guanajuato."

"And?" I interrogated.

"And I am her great-grandniece three removes. Look at this portrait."

WE WERE standing before a wonderful oil painting of a most beautiful lady, haughty, with languorous eyes, and a voluptuous mouth, but with some sort of strange reserve written upon the features. The picture looked hauntingly familiar.

"Now look at me." Ynez Tchacalca struck a pose identical with the pose of the picture. The resemblance was startling. An artist sees below the surface, beyond merely accidental resemblances. The beautiful woman before me was actually most remarkably like the portrait.

"Are we alike?" she asked.

"Most remarkably so," I whispered, with a certain awe.

"She was a saint of the church," she murmured. "But her nephew, my great-great-grandfather, who made the mine at Tieximal what it was in the old days, went back to the worship of the Montezumas and became a high priest in the sun temple of Tieximal. Since that day there are two factions in the family; and only the Catholic faction is recognized by the Mexican government. The other branch leads a sort of underground existence here and at Tieximal."

"And to which faction do you belong?"

"I am of the faith of the old sun worshipers; anathamatized for nearly two hundred years, we are still very strong in numbers and in power. I am an empress and a queen among Montezumas of five provinces. My dream is a dream of restoration. You spoke an hour ago sneeringly as if I worked for Sifert and Seriano. They work for me. I have been unlucky in my choice of employes. Had I succeeded in employing you and Prothro and Barnette before you went to Jarndyce, perhaps my dreams would come true." She spoke with such fire of enthusiasm that I was convinced in spite of myself.

Still I pretended the greatest skepticism.

"And is this your proof positive, Queen Ynez Tchacalca?" I asked mockingly.

"Let us go into the crypt; it is quieter there," she said casually.

We descended a long and broad flight of marble stairs into the stale air of the crypt. In the gloom of the place she pointed to this statue and that, naming them by name and claiming kin with most. We were entirely alone in the crypt. Presently she brought me to a halt before a reclining marble statue of a knight with his feet resting upon the neck of a reclining hound.

"Don Manrique del Para," she instructed, "a brother of my great-great-grandfather, orthodox thru and thru; otherwise he would not be resting here. It is his heirs who have sold our property to Henry Jarndyce. He had no more right to Tieximal than you have, but for the anathema of the church which confiscated our property and gave it to him."

She looked cautiously at the marble stairs above where a shaft of white daylight fell upon them, and then placing her small white hands against the head of the statue began to push with all her might. I stepped beside her and began to push also. To my utter surprise the whole statue, plinth and all, slowly turned as upon a pivot, revealing a dark grave below.

"Flash your light down and descend," she whispered. "Be quick!"

I obeyed. A narrow set of steps revealed themselves and I quickly descended, with her close after me. A moment later the thing swung back into place above our heads. I am frank to say that I felt dismayed. Here was more adventure than I had bargained for.

We were alone in total darkness except for the light of my tiny flash lamp.

"Dost thou love me?" she asked, falling into the thee and thou of endearing discourse.

"She aims to take me in completely, that is plain," I thought. "I love you, carissima regina," I said aloud and turned about to meet the lips that were upheld to mine.

"Dost thou promise to marry me if I prove myself the queen I am?"

"I promise," I said, and we sealed the promise with a long embrace. At that moment I was more than half in love with her, adventuress tho she might be.

A long moment later she took the light from my hand and flashed it along a dark and narrow passageway. Grinning skulls, ranged in rows upon shelves cut out of solid rock, greeted my sight; mummified cadavers stood in every niche and angle of the passage. We were in a veritable Mexican catacomb. I had read of such places and seen a flashlight photograph of one such, but it gave me a creepy feeling to find myself alone in one with this adventuress.* I was greatly intrigued and could not realize that this was the Widow Trabajar of the steamship.

WE PROCEEDED along the passageway for more than a hundred feet, I should say, and came to a great oaken, nail-studded door.

"When it swings open," she whispered, "follow me and keep your eyes always on the ground if you value your life. I will turn to the left. Do not look up and do not look about you till we are seated."

The door swung slowly open as she snapped out the light. As we passed thru I was aware that the air was less stale and was aware of other presences. Well, I should have something to tell if I ever got back to New York. That was worth something. Following her with downcast eyes I was presently aware that she was mounting wide marble stairs. The light in the place was a queer sort of phosphorescent light, not brilliant, but illuminating enough to show me what was about my feet.

"Pass behind me and take the seat to my left," she said when we had reached a sort of platform.

"I sank down and found myself upon soft cushions which exhaled the odor of grave-clothes. Just as I sat down a brilliant light sprang up, and such a sight as I saw. Two gigantic mummies guarded the doorway by which we had entered. Two more stood sentinel to left and right of the platform we had mounted. For the rest, there was in that rich underground hall with its rare hangings and trophies and its rich rugs, perhaps twenty warriors armed with spears. They were all large men and all dressed alike in crimson leather tunics trimmed in gold and with helmets of beaten gold upon their heads.

*At Cloudcroft, New Mexico, a photographer showed me a photograph of just such a passageway

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and ossuary as I have described above.—The Author.

"Whatever else she is," I mused cynically, "she certainly commands a fine lot of movie properties."

She rose to her feet, and every man in the presence passed his spear to his left hand, removed his helmet with a swingling gesture with his right and bent nearly double with a deep bow, bringing his helmet so low that it almost touched the crimson carpet on which they stood. And they remained in this position as long as she remained standing. She had not told me what to do when she rose, and so I rose, too, but kept my eyes downcast.

Then she spoke, and in the queerest language I had ever heard. It was full of harsh staccato consonants and unlike any Latinized tongue I had ever heard. She spoke at some length, and when she finished and sat down, they all arose once more and replaced their helmets and their spears to their right hands.

Then a gigantic fellow, who was evidently their chief or their medicine man, stepped forward and addressed her in the same tongue in which she had spoken. He looked at me from time to time as he spoke, and I thought at times made angry gestures toward me. I wondered if she had told them that I was her fiance and if he were objecting to me. I shouldn't have blamed him if he was objecting to me. Because I am only six feet tall—beside that giant a mere pigmy of a man. Moreover, outside my being a cousin to a Wall Street King I could, of course, lay no claim to royal blood.

After a time the big fellow ceased his palaver and retired to the semi-circle with the others. Then "Queen Ynez" addressed a few more words to them in their language, but without rising, and then bade me in Spanish to stand up. As I rose to my feet about half their number bowed down, but the big fellow and all the rest remained standing and covered. I saw that here was difficulty, and somehow felt rather thankful for it; because I didn't care to go thru a tribal marriage without being consulted, if that was what my queen was up to.

But in an instant she leaped to her feet, and at that they all bowed as before. She spoke rapidly, and angrily, and in a moment the last man of them had backed and bowed from her presence, disappearing not by the door by which we had entered, but by a low passage to the left of the chamber, and the brilliant light snapped out, leaving the room dimly lighted as before.

As soon as they were gone Ynez was herself again, but still trembling from some strange anger. She pulled me to her and kissed my lips and said: "Now what do you think of my pretenses to royal blood?"

"Undoubtedly you're a queen," I said; "and furthermore, you have probably just now saved my life. But I'd like to leave here now if you don't mind."

CHAPTER IX.

"WAIT," she commanded, "I must show you some of the wonders of my underground palace."

She led me about the room, showing me this or that banner or piece of beaded tapestry and explaining the meaning of the designs on each. Finally she pushed thru the great door by which her "knights" had withdrawn and I was delighted to see a shaft and bright daylight filtering in. She led me forward to a great grilled opening, and from it we looked down upon the colorful roofs of the city below.

"Escape from here is impossible," she said with a laugh. "There is a sheer drop of nearly two hundred feet from this window. You see I could keep you here a prisoner if I so desired."

"But you love me too much for that," I said. "And, besides, Prothro, who knows everything, would eventually guess my hiding place; and the Mexican government is against you and the Church is against you, and my cousin, Henry Jarndyce, would use his gold against you and crush you utterly."

She was just a woman, for all her power among her sun worshipers, and at this threatening speech from me, yielded and crept into my arms to be petted. She had somehow grown more beautiful in my sight, and I told her so.

"How should you like to come here every day, and let me dress in the old barbaric garb of my sun worshiping ancestors and have you paint me?" she asked.

"I should be delighted," I declared. "It would make the greatest of great paintings."

"You shall do so. Could you paint me in this light?"

I stood her in the light of the window. "Yes, yes, I could paint you here," I said.

"The light is much better earlier in the day," she said. "You shall come every morning at 9, but we won't have to enter by the crypt. There is another entrance, as you may have guessed."

Thirty minutes later, as we issued thru the crumbling fireplace at the back of the hut of some ancient Mexican and stepped into the honest daylight of the street, I felt like a person coming from an exciting matinee into the humdrum of street life. The whole thing seemed a moment later like a theatrical performance. And then the thought struck me: Perhaps that was all it was after all. But one thing remained to give that theory the lie—that was her remarkable resemblance to the portrait of Saint Ynez in the church above.

"Shall I keep your secret?" I asked, as we parted before my hotel.

"No," she said slowly. "I should rather you would tell Prothro who and what I am and try to employ him to come in with you and me and help us develop our mine."

In the lobby of the hotel I ran into Seriano and Sifert. Both were very cordial, and this to my mind threw light upon Madame Trabajar's new plans with me. She had doubtless told them that she meant to win me away from my friends. I began to have the utmost respect for the woman's intelligence, and began to wonder, also, if she were not actually in love with me, as I feared I was beginning to be with her. With a grim smile I pictured myself deserting Barnette and Prothro; pictured Prothro's implacable wrath and my swift trip back to New York by the route Nelson had taken. I was thankful to Nelson at that moment for showing me what a despicable cur a man could become under the hands of an attractive, scheming woman, and also for showing me just what a desperate adventuress this "Princess Tchacalca" was.

But I made myself very easy with Sifert and his colleague and meanwhile took the opportunity to study the faces of the two. I was convinced that two greater scoundrels never lived, and that neither would stop even at murder to accomplish his purpose. I sat in my room for two hours talking with them, and so far did I make them believe that I was at outs with Prothro and Barnette that they revealed to me much of the inwardness of their own schemes.

"Here's the situation at the Tieximal mine," said Sifert. "Two branches of the same family claim it, an orthodox branch coming down from old Don Enrique del Para and a bunch of sun worshipers coming down from Don Carlos del Tieximal, who was kicked out of his property by the church and the Mexican government for heresy, altho he's the man that first opened up the mine. This Mrs. Trabajar is honestly descended from old Don Carlos; I got that from Henry Jarndyce himself—he knows what he's up against. Now, Gladney, I want to tell you, if you want to make yourself as rich as your cousin and richer, all you've got to do is to marry this woman and go in with us to develop the mine."

"With what resources could we develop it?"

"With borrowed money. You could borrow money, and so could the Princess. But before we can begin to operate we must discourage and dishearten Prothro and his gang."

"They're disheartened now," I said. "They can't set up without those blueprints, and they can't get their machinery off the cars. They're up against it."

"I know they are," pnt in Seriano. "They could be bought off now—at least Barnette could. I could buy Barnette for ten thousand. Prothro would be harder to deal with. He's a hard nut to crack, as you Yankees say."

We talked on for a long time and Sifert finally let me know that Madame Trabajar had given me an exhibition of her royalty; tho how she had communicated that fact to him I cannot guess. I felt like a poor mutt in the toils of a gang of desperate adventurers and began to wonder if I would ever emerge with a whole skin.

"So you are going there every day to paint her picture?" he said. Lucky dog; but that's the way with you stalwart young fellows. Seriano or I might have tried for that, but she had met the wives of both of us before we were sabe to who and what she was. I'd give a million dollars to be in your shoes, young man."

"And I'd give a considerable to be out of them right now," was my mental comment.

CHAPTER X.

I WAS dragged from the midst of weirdest dreams that night by the big fist of Prothro banging on my door and his hearty voice bidding me get up.

"Come in," I said to him, "there are several things I must tell you at once."

He flung himself into a chair like a very tired man and I sat on the edge of the bed and talked and talked. I told him everything, circumstantially and in detail. While I was talking he kept whistling softly between his teeth.

"I have heard something of this before," he said slowly. "Jarndyce knew something of it, but nothing of this Madame Trabajar, and Mora has thrown a little light on the subject from time to time. By the way, that gentry can be troublesome when they take it into

(Continued on Page 16.)

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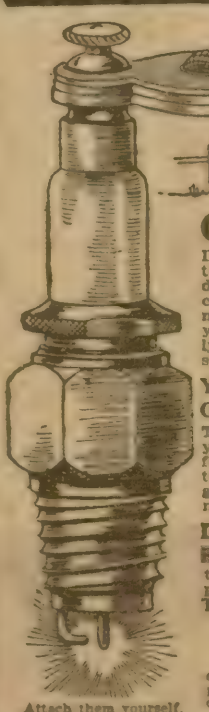

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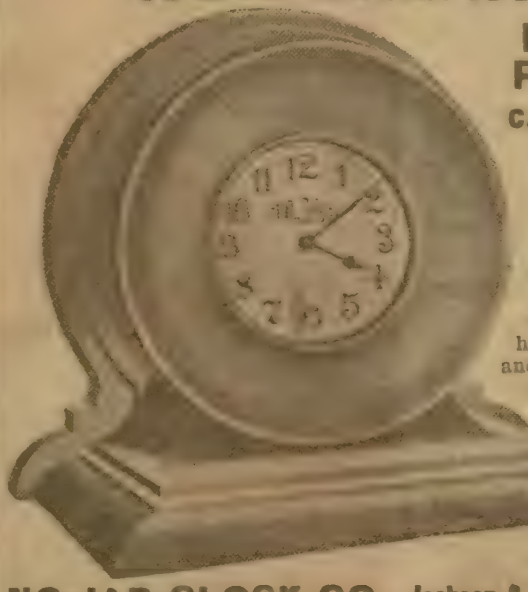

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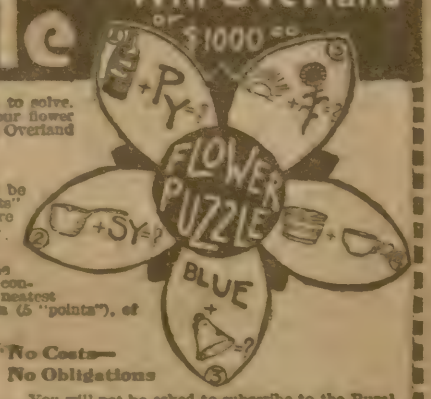

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Address your solution to

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Three Men Named Barnes

By J. C. Kofoed

Read This and Then Finish the Story

Three men named J. B. Barnes, each of whose cards bore the address of New York City, having been murdered on the same day in widely different parts of the world, by unknown assassins whose foul methods furnished no motives for their amazing deeds, the solving of the triple mystery finally devolved upon

JED B. BARNES, the young and keen-witted sheriff of Casawauga County, Texas, who, strange to say, was named as legatee of a million-dollar estate—or estates—left by his three slain namesakes, according to the announcement of one

WALSTENHOLME, a mysterious foreigner and lawyer of San Francisco, the scene of one of the murders. The other two killings took place in Wollenstein, Bohemia, and in Casawauga County, Texas, respectively.

HANS KIRRSTETTER kept the inn in the little Bohemian village where one J. B. Barnes, an American and supposed millionaire, met his death, and

HERR STAUFFER, burgomaster of the place, was the village official into whose hands remained the evidence of the sensational crime after Kirrstetter, his servants, and the American's chauffeur had disappeared.

Jed Barnes, the young sheriff, had hoped to win the heart and hand of

CONSTANCE HARPER, daughter of "Old Man" Harper, a ranch owner, whose cook,

FOO GAT was a Chinaman and a character of many mysterious ways.

"TOUGH" SIMPSON, chief of a bootlegging gang and suspected of other evil doings, furnished a satisfactory alibi when accused of the Casawauga County murder, but the slayers had used his car to reach the isolated spot and to make their getaway when Jed, the young sheriff, appeared upon the scene.

News that two men named J. B. Barnes had been murdered in the United States having reached Herr Stauffer in Wollenstein, he promptly resigned his office as burgomaster and sailed for New York, with the hope that he would be able to clear up the gasthouse mystery and prove the innocence of his friend Kirrstetter. He was amazed, however, as the great vessel left her home dock to see the little gasthouse proprietor, who had been missing since the murder, standing on the wharf and waving a good-by to him.

Some weeks later Stauffer met Jed Barnes in San Francisco and explained his errand on this side of the big water, but just why he had been seen in company with

"THREE-ARMED RUTH," the tricky shoplifter, was something he failed to explain to Jed's satisfaction. Now you can pick up the threads of this puzzling story and get the solution of the deep, triangular mystery.

This story began in No. 8 the Ledger for Feb. 19. Back copies may be obtained from our agents or newsdealers.

VIII.

JED instantly invited Herr Stauffer to accompany him. This connection—even tho it were the merest whisp of a link—between "Three-Arm Ruth," the little jewel thief, and the triple murder was more than welcome. It was very unlikely that she had anything definite to do with the actual killings, but she probably knew—and knowing, could be forced to tell. The Texan telephoned for a taxicab, and they went down hurriedly when it was announced.

The neighborhood to which Ruth Dyce had invited Barnes was anything but a savory one. Jed made a shrewd guess that this Van Ness avenue address was a rendezvous rather than her home. She was too dainty to tolerate the smells and uncleanness of such a place.

The taxi drew up before 1184½. Jed paid the fare, ascended the slimy steps, with Stauffer at heel, and rang the bell. He could hear it jangle somewhere in the depths of the house. Then a slot in the door opened and a pair of beady eyes peered out.

"Who there?" croaked a voice.

"Ruth told me to be here at 9 o'clock," said Barnes carelessly.

"You got plaper?"

Jed thrust the slip containing the "three-armed lady's" name thru the aperture. A moment later the door slid open, and they stepped into a bare, musty hall, almost entirely denuded of wall paper. A single gas jet burned with a blue, whistling flame, and by its light Barnes looked at the Chinese guardian of the portals—and recognized him as Foo Gat, Old Man Harper's vanishing cook!

"Well, I'll be dumfoozled!" was the exclamation wrung from his lips. "What are you doing here?"

Foo Gat gave the ex-sheriff a cunning glance. "I got new job," he explained. "Batter pay than lanch. No likee countly, anyhow; likee city."

Barnes began to wonder. It was utterly impossible that all these meetings and happenings were due to coincidence. They were all shaping toward a very definite conclusion, he felt sure. Stauffer's meeting with him was not strange, for the burgomaster had sought him out. The reasons for almost everything else that had happened recently was veiled in the blackness of mystery. There were so many things that he wanted to find out.

Why were the three men named Barnes killed and who put them out of the way? Was Connie really the girl he had heard scream at Barren Hill? What had Tough Simpson to do with the matter? Why did Connie object to his coming to 'Frisco? Why had the million dollars been willed to him on those absurd conditions—and what did Wolstenholme know that he had not disclosed? These, and a score of other unanswered questions flashed thru his mind as he stood there in the wretched hallway, waiting for Foo Gat to lead him on. For that matter, there was something strange in the Chinaman's appearance here—something that could not be explained by higher wages or a fondness for the city. It was one of the so far unexplainable things that had built a barrier between Jed and a possible solution of the mystery.

The Chinaman bowed, and requested the honorable gentlemen to follow him. They did so.

He led them into a "best" parlor, furnished in the atrocious taste of the nineties—horsehair furniture, antimacassar, and even a glass bell containing wax flowers from the grave of some unfortunate family member. When they had seated themselves he glided away with that peculiar feline step of his.

He padded back presently with Ruth Dyce, who had changed her afternoon costume to a striking evening gown of peacock blue. She greeted Barnes cordially, but gave Stauffer a rather cool stare. It was quite apparent that she could not account for his presence. Jed introduced them, and then, quite frankly, explained why he had brought the burgomaster with him.

"It's mighty important for me to find out who committed these murders, and, as your name was found on the man who was killed in Wollenstein——"

The smile died out of the girl's eyes and the color from her cheeks as Barnes continued. Her face became a colorless and expressionless mask. She was trembling, and laid both little hands against the back of the chair to steady her.

"My—my name was found on him?" she stammered.

"Yes, written on a bit of paper similar to the one you handed me this evening."

"Then they got him," Miss Dyce said under her breath, "and they promised that he was not to be harmed. Drat them!" she flared out suddenly. "What right had they?—what right?——"

"Don't you think you had better help me out?" asked Barnes. "It would clear the atmosphere considerably if you would tell me what you know."

"I'll do what I can, tho I don't know such an awful lot. It wasn't by chance that we met this evening, Mr. Barnes. I was following him for a good two hours. They knew you were in town, and I had my instructions——"

"Who are they?"

"You'll learn that later—perhaps. I slipped into Sheppard and Company's to get closer to you and I feared to do a little business at the same time. You were quicker than a plain-clothes bull to hop on me, but that's all right." She dropped her voice to a whisper. "I asked you to come here tonight to warn you to beat it out of town. They've decided to put you out of the way next. Come along with me. I'll show you something that may surprise you."

"You Shan't," Roared Harper, Pointing a Revolver at His Daughter.

THE two men followed her out of the dingy hall, and up two creaking flights of stairs to the third floor. Their destination was a room facing the side yards that separated the two houses. The windows opposite were not more than seven feet apart.

It had started to rain, and the rush of it against the windows, and the groaning and straining of timbers in that old barn of a house was infinitely depressing. To Jed Barnes, crouched there in the darkness, his gaze fixed on the square patch of light that indicated the uncurtained room opposite, the whole affair seemed just as tangled as ever.

"I want you to tell me what you know," whispered Jed, as he felt the jewel thief's slim fingers on his arm. "What was this Barnes who was killed in Wollenstein to you?"

"He was nothing to me but a friend—a good friend," she cried passionately. "The three Barnes boys were black sheep, but Jack—my Jack was good. Joe and Jim were scoundrels. They deserved nothing better than they got——"

"Were they relatives of mine?"

"I've heard the others here say you were cousins. An uncle of yours in Goldlands married one of the saloon dancers there, and the three boys were born——"

"I didn't know of them. They couldn't have known much of me. Then why should they have willed me their money—more than a million dollars——"

Ruth stared at him. "You're crazy. A million! Jim and Joe were almost broke. Jack had about twenty thousand on which he was making a play in Europe!" Suddenly she gripped his arm, and Barnes swung his gaze around to the patch of light.

A man had entered the room across the way, and tumbled his lank frame into a comfortable chair. A cigarette hung between his fingers, and a thin spiral of smoke curled up toward the ceiling. Barnes' eyes narrowed. That man had brought him the three wills. If Ruth Dyce was telling the truth—and she seemed in too excited a condition to lie coherently—Wolstenholme had tricked him. But for what purpose? If he was connected with the murderers why should he set him—Barnes—on their trail, with a fabulous reward to inspire him toward success?

From then on things happened so quickly and startlingly that Jed had no time to wonder over them as they occurred. What occurred left the three watchers in the third story of the dingy Van Ness avenue house breathless.

A woman and three men entered the room across the way. At first, as their heads were averted, Barnes could not see who they were. Apparently their conversation was heated; they gestured passionately. Finally they swung around to face the lank lawyer, draped over his easy chair, and Jed rapped out a startled exclamation:

"Connie—and Old Man Harper—and Tough Simpson!"

"Kirrstetter!" shouted Stauffer, banging his first on the window ledge.

"I will do it," Connie's voice suddenly sounded.

"You shan't," roared Harper, his dark features frightfully congested with rage.

Then, without a word of warning, he jerked a revolver from a pocket of his coat, and fired point-blank at his daughter! She reeled back, and crumpled to the floor.

A moment later the lights went out!

IX.

FOR one awful moment Jed Barnes leaned against the wall, stunned, helpless—the reverberation of that deadly shot ringing in his ears. Connie was lying in the house opposite, wounded—perhaps dead—shot down in cold blood by her own father—Connie, the girl he loved!

With an almost inarticulate cry of rage, Jed snatched up a chair and smashed the window into fragments; leaned across the gulf, and hurled it thru the one across the way. Then, to the horror of his companions, he climbed out of the window, and followed the chair with a leap that carried him thru what was left of the opposite window frame.

Jed scarcely felt the cuts inflicted on his face by the jagged glass or the sharp pain that flashed thru his knee as he sprawled across the ledge, and rolled to the floor. He came to his feet like a cat, and struck a match. In its momentary flicker he located the electric button, and switched on the light.

Connie lay on the floor, one arm pillowing her head, the other outstretched, with the slim fingers helplessly relaxed. There was a smear of blood trickling from her hair onto her forehead. Barnes knelt beside the girl, and lifted her to a sitting position. To his intense relief she was breathing. In the language of the range, she had been "creased," and was likely to suffer little more than the inconvenience of a severe headache.

"Sweetheart," he whispered, "Speak to me, dear."

Connie opened her eyes in a dazed sort of a way, and looked up at him.

"My head is swimming, Jed," she whispered. "What is the matter? Oh, I remember—he shot me—he shot me!"

"The beast! What under heaven could impel a man to try to kill his own daughter?"

"I am not his real daughter," the girl said faintly. "He is my stepfather, and he wanted to kill me because I intended telling the police all I knew of the Barnes murders."

Jed suddenly sniffed suspiciously. The acrid smell of burning wood was tainting the stuffy air. Connie's story could

wait. The principal thing was to get out. He ran to the door, and flung it open. A cloud of oily smoke billowed into the room. Above the crackling roar of the flames that had wrapped the stairway Barnes could hear pistol shots and the inarticulate shouts of fighting men. He came back to the girl, and helped her to her feet. She was still very weak and giddy, so Jed put his arm around her waist to steady her.

"We're cut off from the stairs, Connie," he said quietly, "and there is a fight going on down there, too. Probably the police have raided this house for some reason or other. Is there any other egress from here?"

The smoke was seeping thru the interstices about the door, and already it was becoming difficult to breathe. The open window sucked it in the faster.

"There is a trapdoor to the roof in the next room," Connie told him. So. Jed swung her into his arms, opened the door, and switched on the light. The sound of firing had ceased, or, perhaps, it was merely drowned by the increasing roar of the flames. He placed Connie in one chair, and secured the only other one in the door to elevate him sufficiently to reach the trapdoor. When he opened it, admitting a whirl of rain, he found Tough Simpson's villainous features peering down at him.

"You can't come out this way, feller," said the bootlegger. He jiggled his Colt to emphasize his statement. "You an' that kid o' Harper's are goin' to get a taste o' real fire pretty soon."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that this buildin' is goin' up soon, and that you'll go with it. You've been on my heels long enough, an' caused me all sorts of trouble, but this ought to square matters; hey, sheriff?"

Very slowly Jed's hand crept toward his breast. His eyes were fixed on the gleaming ones above him.

"You thought I killed that feller out on Barren Hill, didn't you?" cried Simpson thickly. "It was Old Man Harper did that. He garroted the fellow with Foo Gat's cord just like a d—d, sneakin' greaser would do. Your little Connie was there, but she was afraid to say anything at first, because she knew the old man would bump her off, too. Foo Gat an' his brother got the other Barnes here in 'Frisco with a hatchet—a blamed good way, but messy. I'm tellin' you these things because you ain't got a chance to tell them to nobody else. I'm no double-crosser like that blasted Swiss o' Kirrstetter's, who brought the flycops down on the place tonight. They're battlin' downstairs right now. You get Connie to tell you the rest o' the story while you're roastin' here. Tomorrow night I'll be in Butte, readin' the sad news. No—" he hesitated—"while I'm at it I better be sure an' croak the pair of you——"

BY THE time Simpson reached this point in his oration, Jed's hand had crept to the top button of his coat. For the twinkle of a second it disappeared beneath it, and came out with a weapon that had been hidden in a holster beneath his armpit. He swung the barrel of the weapon upward, and fired just as the bad man's finger was contracting about his own trigger. Tough Simpson came plunging down, to land like a ruddled sack of oats at his feet.

In the next room the door had gone down before the blasting flames. The heat was almost unendurable. Jed carried Connie thru the trapdoor, then returned, and swung Simpson's inert body across his shoulders. A moment later he was on the roof in the cooling rain.

It required but a moment to cross to the next house and locate the trapdoor there, which luckily happened to be open. Jed halloed, and Stauffer answered his hail. His hair was on ends, and his clothes rather scuffed and torn. Jed passed Connie and the still unconscious Simpson down, and followed himself a moment later.

"You look as tho you've been thru a little excitement yourself," he said.

The burgomaster grunted. "It was that yellow ape, Foo Gat. He heard me speaking with Fraulein Dyce, and made to stick a knife between my ribs. He gave me a hard fight," said the Schleswigger grimly. "But I trussed him up, and he lies in the next room like a chicken ready for roasting."

"Good. Foo Gat is an accomplice, at least in the San Francisco murder, and if Old Man Harper is taken—Well, let's get out of here. We can talk things over later."

It was a strange procession that wended its way down the creaking flights of stairs, thru the dingy hall, and out into the rain-splattered street. Barnes, in the lead, bore Tough Simpson draped limply across his shoulder. Stauffer followed, carrying Foo Gat, who glared at every one with the eyes of a wounded snake. Ruth Dyce and Connie brought up the rear.

Ziesniss was in the street. He called a patrol wagon and an automobile. The Chinaman and Simpson were thrust into the former, and the detective chief climbed into the limousine with Jed and Stauffer and Connie. Ruth left her address and departed. She was instinctively nervous in the presence of the police.

"We're getting into the homestretch, Barnes," the chief said, "and I think the whole affair will be cleaned up at headquarters this very night. That is where we are going now. We have Kirrstetter. You took Foo Gat and Tough Simpson, and by the eternal they'll tell what they know or I'm a heathen!"

"What about Harper?" Jed asked in a whisper.

"We had to kill him," Ziesniss said gravely. "He backed up against the wall, a gun in each fist and fought us and damned us to the end. Three of my men are in the hospital right now from his fire. The man was a devil under his suave exterior—a cold, calculating, ruthless devil."

"How did you happen to get here at this particularly opportune time?"

"One of Kirrstetter's servants, probably angered at the treatment he had received, and, more probably still, sniffing a reward, came to me with the information that led us to raid the house. Now, Miss Harper," he added, turning to Connie, "you might as well tell us what you know of the Barren Hill affair before we get to the station."

THE girl drew a long breath. "Mr. Harper was my stepfather, tho every one in Claxton thought he was my real Dad. He was all Mr. Ziesniss has said—cold and calculating—but he always assumed a very kindly air in public. It was only by little bits and dribbles that I learned of the Barnes affair. Those three men had inherited a vast tract of land that was fairly dripping with oil. Mr. Harper decided to get control of it, but, as the Barnes brothers were widely scattered, he needed assistance. He took Hans Kirrstetter, a cousin of his, then living in Wollenstein, into his confidence, also Tough Simpson and Foo Gat. He had papers forged, transferring the land from the Barnes brothers to him.

"I had no idea that they contemplated murder until the very day that it occurred. My stepfather took Tough Simpson's car and ran out to Barren Hill. I followed him. He had lured Jim Barnes there, and, hidden in the brush, I—I saw him strangle the man. It sickened me; I screamed. He whirled on me with the face of death, swung me off my feet, and carried me into a small cave, hidden in the hillside. We lay there while Jed searched, and finally carried the body away."

"Why didn't you tell me all this?" cried Barnes.

"He said he would kill you if I did," sobbed Connie.

"Tonight I made up my mind that I had to tell; the secret was crushing me. I told him so, and he shot at me—"

The taxicab drew up before police

(Continued on Page 21.)

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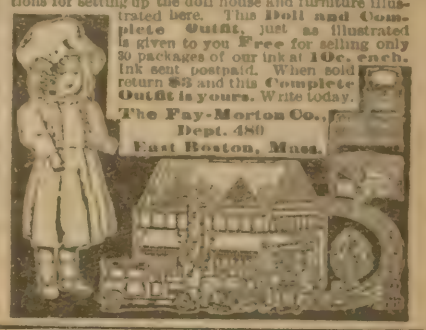

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Spiegel, May, Stern Co. 1462 W. 35th Street, Chicago

Dopey

(Continued From Page 4.)

"He's all of that," agreed Della, making her way kitchenward. Mr. Brown and his wife were entering, and Della knew better than to keep them waiting for any length of time.

Mr. Jones leisurely finished his breakfast and the morning paper at the same time, between whiles speculating upon the probable business of the queer boarder. Only the morning before had Mr. Jones been snubbed severely by this man—and Mr. Jones wasn't used to being snubbed. Mr. Jones had offered the aloof one his paper to read, and his friendly effort had been repulsed. "If I wanted a paper to read I most certainly would have provided myself with one before now," he had muttered crossly, and left the room without another word.

"He's certainly a queer bird!" When Mr. Jones made that remark about any one once—and this time he had made it twice—the remark held more significance than would have been the case had you or I uttered it. For, as has been noted in an earlier chapter, Mr. Jones was a detective, and, to his sleuth-like mind, queer and crooked were synonymous. "I'll just keep my eye on that duck," decided Mr. Jones, leaving the room.

At the foot of the stairs he met Momma, looking pale and greatly worried. It was evident that she had been waiting for him. "Oh, Mr. Jones, I'm that worried I didn't sleep a wink last night," she exclaimed under her breath. "Come in my room a minute, will you?"

Mr. Jones had been on his way to the office to play his usual round of pinochle with Pop, who, he could see from where he stood, was already shuffling the cards in anticipation of the game, but Mr. Jones, no matter the cause, never refused the ladies.

"What's on your mind, Momma?" he asked, sympathetically, when she had closed the door.

Momma threw a cautious glance about the room as tho to make sure they were quite alone. "There's a thief in the house, Mr. Jones," she whispered impressively.

Mr. Jones started, then pulled forth from his pocket a little notebook. "What's missing?" he asked abruptly, feeling for his pencil.

"Nothing. There's nothing missing so far——"

Mr. Jones seemed disappointed. "Then how——" he began politely.

Momma didn't wait for the question. "He steals cans of corn, and ladies' shoes, and—everything he lays his eyes on," she said.

"Who?" asked Mr. Jones.

"That long jumping-jack of a new boarder we got. His name is Snooks," answered Momma, breathing heavily.

"Umph—ugh!" Mr. Jones was startled out of his professional calm. "I knew something was the matter with him," he exclaimed. "Tell me about it."

Momma needed no urging. Suppressing only the fact that she had made the discovery while upon a snooping expedition, and supplying a few needful details as she went along, she told him the main facts of the case.

"He went upstairs about 9 o'clock," said Momma hoarsely, "and two minutes later he yelled down for me to bring him a pitcher of water. And when I got there with it, there was his door standing wide open, and the gas turned up to the ceiling, and he wasn't anywhere about. And there were his clothes hanging in the closet—the indecent thing had gone wherever he went without any clothes on—and when I looked again to make sure, I found all them groceries, and shoes, and——"

Truly exciting. Mr. Jones experienced a thrill of anticipation. "He's a crook," he exclaimed happily. "Where did you say he went?"

"I didn't say. He went wherever he went without any clothes on——"

"Perhaps," suggested Mr. Jones, "he has another suit. Most of us have, you know."

But Momma was quite certain that this was not the case. "I've never seen him in another," she grunted. "He came in that suit; and he wore it Sunday—I noticed in particular. If a man has a second suit, wouldn't he wear it down to dinner on Sunday?"

Mr. Jones thought it likely. Clothes aside, tho, there was still the presence of the groceries to be accounted for, and he resolved to sleuth this man Snooks until he had found the key to the mystery, that is, after working hours. Between the hours of 9 and 6, Mr. Jones served the city in the capacity of "plainclothes man." He would have liked nothing better this day than to lay off and devote his energies to the present case, but he had just recently been promoted from the force, and none knew better than he how very easily he could be reduced again.

He snapped his watch regretfully. "You keep your eyes open till I get back," he warned Momma.

CHAPTER V.

"LET'S tear out of this dump, Myrt!" Thus did Dopey, in his first wakening moments, voice his disapproval of his present surroundings.

Myrtle, heavy-lidded with sleep, and clad in the wreck of what had once been an expensive silk morning dress and broken-down dancing slippers of purple, stood before the rickety bureau endeavoring to put up her mop of taffy-colored hair. She, herself, was far from pleased with her aunt's bounty, but as yet had voiced no complaint. But she did feel abused. Here it was, barely 11 o'clock, and no less than three times had Momma pounded upon the door. The first and second time Myrtle had made her aunt depart and let them sleep, as they were very tired, and moreover, not accustomed to rising that early. The third time, however, she had risen and gone to the door, and requested that breakfast be sent up immediately. This, Momma point-blank refused to do. "Breakfast is over long ago,'" she had retorted angrily "and if you two want any dinner, I may as well tell you right now, if you don't come downstairs for it you won't get any!"

From beneath the covers Dopey watched his wife finish her toilet. "Let's tear out of here, Myrt," he said again.

For the first time Myrtle seemed aware that her husband had spoken. "You'd best pile out and dress, Dopey," she said sharply, "else you won't get any dinner."

Dopey groaned. "I ain't hungry," he declared. "What I need right now is a drink, worst kind. My throat is all tied in knots."

"I ain't got another cent, Dopey."

"What we——"

"Get up!"

Dopey got up. "Don't see why you're so cross about it," he grumbled, reaching for his trousers. "I ain't——"

"You ain't what?" Myrtle faced her husband in exasperation. "I tell you that it was your fault we landed in this pickle. Dress—and for God's sake shut up!"

Dopey subsided and dressed. And while he was dressing, there came to him a brilliant idea—a regular life-saver. Last evening Mr. Jones had given him a drink of whisky, and the bottle, as he remembered it, was half full of the stuff. And as Mr. Jones, according to his own statement, did not drink, but used it merely as a lotion for a bruised shoulder, Dopey had an idea that much of it was still there. Also, he had another idea. Right after dinner some of it was going to be removed.

With a celerity new to him, Dopey washed, combed his hair, and donned his coat. "Come on, Myrt," he said almost brightly. "Let's go down and see what kind of grub your aunt hands out to her boarders."

The less said about the dinner the better. Suffice it that Dopey liked neither the food that Momma served, nor the way it was served, nor the place in which it was served. He did not tarry long. Leaving Myrtle in a spirited tilt with her aunt, he soon left the table and went upstairs.

A moment later Dopey was tip-toeing down the upper hall. "Now if the old codger hasn't locked his door——"

He hadn't. With no trouble at all Dopey turned the knob and let himself into Mr. Jones' room. Then came bitter disappointment. Evidently, Mr. Jones had wasted some more of the precious liquid upon his blooming shoulder. Just a couple of real stiff drinks remained in the flask. However, a part of a loaf, as some philosopher has so deftly informed us, is better by far than nothing. Without grumbling, Dopey turned the bottle up and drained the contents thereof into his system. Then, feeling vastly better, he withdrew to his and Myrtle's room and threw himself across the bed.

There, however, he could not have remained for long, for about 3 o'clock, when Myrtle had finally convinced her aunt that under no consideration would she help with the housework; that "it wasn't ladylike," and came upstairs, her husband was nowhere in evidence.

"That's funny! Puzzled, she waited half an hour, then went back downstairs to make inquiry. She might have saved herself the trouble, tho. No one in the house had laid eyes upon Dopey since dinner.

"He'll be back soon," said Momma with deep sarcasm. "You couldn't lose him if you wanted to, Myrtle. He'll be back in time for supper."

She missed her guess, tho, for Dopey did not return for supper. And, more than that, bedtime found him still missing.

Myrtle threw herself across the bed and burst into tears. "He has left me for good," she wailed.

CHAPTER VI.

TEN o'clock. Closing up time, thank goodness! Momma heaved a sigh of relief, turned down the gas, and bolted the door.

HE DARKENED HIS GRAY HAIR

Tells How He Did It.

Mr. J. A. McCrea, a well-known resident of California, who was called Daddy and Grandpa on account of his white hair, and who darkened it with a home-made mixture, recently made the following statement:

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These ingredients can be bought at any drug store at very little cost. Apply to the hair twice a week until the desired shade is obtained. It does not color the scalp, is not sticky or greasy and does not rub off."

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Think of the IRON FORCE, the grim determination and the MIGHTY COURAGE shown by the man in this picture. A pale thin watery blooded man would have probably turned and fled and been devoured by the beasts, just as SUCH A MAN IS OVERCOME AND DEVOURED BY REVERSES IN BUSINESS, HARD TIMES, by an attack of ill health or disaster of any kind.

With an IRON WILL, backed by plenty of iron in your blood, you are ready to tackle any job—nothing can stop you—but without it, you worry, fret and "stew," you are full of excuses and tales of bad luck but this does not bring home the "Cash." Don't try to "fool yourself" into thinking you are "a man of blood and iron" when you have good reason to suspect that you are not. Consider the SIZE OF YOUR BANK BALANCE and what SUCCESS you have had in life.

In the West a few years ago, a strong keen red-blooded man who was always ready to face any danger, who never thought of FEAR OR FAILURE, was often referred to as a man who could "Whip His Weight in Wild Cats."

In those days historians even wrote of us as a nation of RED-BLOODED AMERICANS but today about one person out of every three is said to suffer more or less from malnutrition or lack of sufficient nourishment which is caused NOT by lack of food but often by LACK OF SUFFICIENT IRON in the blood to enable us to GET THE STRENGTH out of our food.

FOOD IS WORTH NOTHING UNLESS YOU GET THE STRENGTH AND NOURISHMENT OUT OF IT. In fact it often happens that the more you eat the more you starve as your digestive organs are unable to handle much food, when your blood LACKS IRON and you often think you have stomach trouble when it isn't that at all—SIMPLY EAT LESS AND TAKE IRON.

OUR FOREFATHERS ATE COARSE FOODS; the husks of grains, the skins of vegetables, and fruits which are RICH IN IRON but modern cookery throws all these things away—hence the alarming increase in IRON STARVATION OF THE BLOOD and its attendant ills.

Without iron your blood not only loses its power to change food into living cells and tissue but it can no longer carry oxygen to your brain. Without oxygen your brain becomes dull and heavy; your memory poor; your will power weak; you make bad decisions; things always seem to turn out wrong; you are often overcome by an overpowering sense of fear and failure. All the "fight" and "go-ahead" in you is taken out—A MAN IS ONLY PART OF A MAN WHEN HIS BLOOD LACKS IRON. When you get up feeling tired in the morning, when you find yourself nervous irritable and easily upset; when you can no longer do your day's work without being all fagged out at night or have pains across the back and your face looks pale and drawn do not wait until you go all to pieces and collapse in a state of nervous prostration or until in your weakened condition you contract some serious disease but take some organic iron like NUXATED IRON at once to help enrich your blood and revitalize your worn out exhausted nerves. Organic Nuxated Iron often increases the bodily and mental vigor of weak, tired, worn out, nervous people in two weeks' time. It's like the iron in your blood and like the iron in spinach, lentils and apples. You can even eat it if you wish. It will not blacken or injure the teeth nor disturb the stomach. It is entirely different from ordinary metallic iron which people usually take, and which is made merely by the action of strong acids on small pieces of iron.

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It had been a heavy day. Every day was heavy for Momma, but this one—oh, my gracious! What with the ordinary run of affairs, and fussing with Myrtle, and worrying over the disappearance of her crazy little husband, to say nothing of having a natural-born thief under her roof—why, Momma nearly wished that she were dead.

Momma clumped moodily down the hall to the kitchen. It was brilliantly lighted. Della was entertaining her friend. Momma did not intrude. In her present temper she would have liked nothing better than to have strode in, ordered the gentleman in question out in a double-quick hurry, and sent Della scurrying off to bed. Prudence forbade, however. Della was a good waitress, and she didn't care about losing her. So, contenting herself with warning Della to lock up properly, she betook herself to her room. Not to remain, tho, for hardly had she closed the door when sudden memories of the previous evening struck her. "I wonder if he's in his room now?" said Momma to herself.

Not half an hour previously had Momma seen the suspected one come in and go bounding up the stairs. But, with a fellow of that sort, one never knows. The evening just before she had seen him just as clearly.

Wheezily and slowly and quietly Momma climbed the stairs. Beyond doubt the man was there this time. Behind the closed door she could hear him plainly moving about. Momma felt a pang of disappointment shoot thru her. Some way or other she had been certain that it would be otherwise. Back she toiled down the stairs.

Momma was a light sleeper. Some had it that she didn't really sleep at all, merely dozing the night thru with one eye and both ears open for trouble. As to that, no proof exists, but it is a fact that within fifteen minutes of retiring, she was on her feet again and listening intently. Creak, creak, creak; some one was coming down the stairs. A shiver of anticipation convulsed Momma's massive form. Silently she crossed the floor and opened the door a crack. Too late, however. Thru the flickery haze thrown by the low-turned hall light, she saw the indeterminate figure of a man lightly jump the three remaining steps of the staircase, then race noiselessly down the hall and thru the office. Before Momma had sufficiently recovered her wits to call out, he had unbolted the door, thrown it wide with reckless haste, and disappeared into the darkness outside.

A moment Momma stood in the center of the hall, her mouth open, her eyes bulging in astonishment. Then, hearing quick footsteps on the pavement outside, she hastened to her window, threw up the blind, and pressed her nose to the window. She was barely in time to glimpse a speeding form as it plunged into the opaque shadows of the freight yards. A moment later, another figure, slender and short, darted across the street and disappeared in the same manner as had the first one. Momma was about to withdraw and give the alarm, when a third shadow flitted for an instant across her line of vision, only to be swallowed the next among the freight cars.

"Three of 'em," gasped Momma in amazement. Five minutes longer she waited at the window, then, no one else appearing, she closed the blind and donned her wrapper. Pop was peacefully sleeping, and for a moment Momma had a notion to awaken and acquaint him with what had happened. Only a moment, tho. What was the use! Pop never was much good in emergencies. Once more she climbed the stairs. "I wonder if that was him?" she asked herself over and over.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. JONES, "plainclothes" cop and Momma Webber's star boarder, in the act of inserting his key into the keyhole of the front door, sprang aside barely in time to escape collision with some one who at that moment yanked the door violently open and lunged forth into the darkness of the street.

A grunt of surprise and Mr. Jones was himself again. Quickly deciding that he didn't care about going to bed just then, he mechanically returned the key to his pocket and gave chase. Altho Mr. Jones for the life of him could not have given even an approximate description of the figure that had hurtled past him, yet he had a well-grounded idea as to its identity.

"It's Snooks," he panted. "I bet he's been up to some devilment."

Mr. Jones rounded the corner of the hotel just in time to see the fugitive dash in front of a street car, gain the further sidewalk, then immediately plunge into the labyrinth of railroad yards beyond.

On noting this action a great light broke upon Mr. Jones' understanding. For months past the authorities and shippers and consignees of Canton had been at the mercy of an organized band of boxcar thieves, and for about the same length of time had Mr. Jones spent most of his waking hours in trying to get a "line-up" on the gang. So far, however, not a single clew had crowned his efforts.

But now! Mr. Jones berated himself for a numbskull. Not once had he connected Momma's news with the raids that for months had been so common. Now, however, he saw their relationship with staggering clarity. Mr. Snooks was one of the gang himself!

Mr. Jones grasped his revolver tightly and plunged into the stygian shadows cast by two parallel strings of boxcars. With great caution he moved along, for the ground was very rough and uneven, and he could see nothing. He could hear, however. Far ahead he could make out the sound of hurried footsteps. As rapidly and as quietly as possible, he followed.

Suddenly the sounds ceased, and Mr. Jones became wary and proceeded with more elaborate caution. "He's found his car and is trying to break in," opined he.

It was a bad guess, tho, as Mr. Jones soon learned. The man, whoever he was, had simply come to the end of the righthand string of cars, had crossed the tracks, and taken a different aisle. By the very caution of his advance Mr. Jones nearly missed him for good, but not quite. As Mr. Jones came to the opening, crossed the tracks and peered uncertainly about him, he espied, by the murky glare of a far-off electric, a dim figure disappearing around the end of a second string of cars.

Had Mr. Jones been a less seasoned campaigner, he might have followed this second string to the end, trusting to the chance of again finding his quarry. As it was, being perfectly familiar with his surroundings, he lost no time in executing a flank movement. That is to say, by the simple expedient of crawling underneath the cars, he again brought into view the figure of the man he was stalking. Also, he missed something that would have greatly interested him. Had he gone but half a block further—but that is neither here nor there.

Mr. Jones, unaware of what he had missed by his change in routine, scrambled to his feet with a clear conscience and followed his man. It being somewhat lighter here, and the going smoother, he made much better time. When within fifty yards of the fellow he was following, he purposely slackened his gait. If possible he wished to catch the man red-handed.

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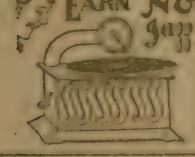

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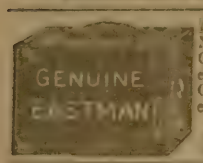

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"Where can he be taking me," wondered Mr. Jones. Then he uttered an exclamation and broke into a run. His man had disappeared.

There! He had picked him up again. But was it the man he was after? Mr. Jones reluctantly thought not. A mistake had been made somewhere. They were now approaching the depot, and outlined against the brilliant glare of the platform lights, Mr. Jones now discovered that he was following a gentleman; at least a man garbed as one; a gentleman wearing a conventional dress suit and a high silk hat.

Mr. Jones was sorely puzzled. For an instant he hesitated, then, half-heartedly, he moved on again. "I got to be sure," he muttered.

Half an hour later Mr. Jones quietly let himself into his lodging-house, tiptoed up the stairs and went to bed. "I guess I won't say anything about it to Momma," he decided, turning off the light.

Next morning, however, he felt better about it. In the first place, Momma already knew part of the occurrence, and she babbled of it so incessantly and excitedly that Mr. Jones could hardly eat his breakfast. And in the second, Mr. Snooks was absent; for the first time in many days the chair occupied by him at the corner table was vacant. Huh? At least he had guessed the right man.

"I was right outside the door when he came thru; had to jump aside to keep from getting run over," he said. Before he knew it, almost, he was giving Momma a graphic acount of the chase. "But he got away somehow," finished Mr. Jones, informing her as to its ending.

Momma thought deeply a moment then jumped to her feet in excitement. "Why didn't you grab him anyway?" she demanded.

"Why, he was all togged up in style; and they knew him; called him Geor——"

Momma waved her hands impatiently. "George! Sure they called him George. Did you ever know a waiter they didn't call George, or James, or something easy? And don't they always dress up like the people they work for?"

Mr. Jones couldn't say for sure, he never having lived in what you might call real style. But come to think of it, the help in the fashionable hotels uptown dressed——

Just then a commotion upstairs caused their thoughts to take a different channel. Piercing screams filled the air.

"It's Myrtle," shouted Momma wildly. "She is being murdered!"

Now, here is a fine state of affairs! Snooks, the mysterious boarder, away on another of his unexplained rambles and the smiling detective unable to throw any light on the suspected thief's whereabouts; Dopey also missing, and Myrtle screaming for help in an upper room—her life in danger, perhaps, as Momma already is convinced. For more of this rapid-fire story, get next week's Ledger.

Coming: A South Sea Island Adventure Story
Watch for the Announcements

Princess or Adventuress

(Continued From Page 11)

their heads. Do you believe this woman is actually a sun-worshiper?"

"She talks their jargon, and she looks remarkably like that portrait in the Chapel of Saint Ynez."

"By George, come to think of it, she does. I remember that picture very well; and I was always wondering on the boat who it was she looked like. Boy, it looks to me like she's mighty near got you hooked. Do you want to marry her?"

"Do you?"

He slapped his thigh and laughed heartily. "Your old questioning trick! No, I'm otherwise employed. So she asked you to use your influence to win me over? Of course, you know I work for Jarndyce. But say, come to think of it, mightn't it be to Jarndyce's advantage if we took her in with us? Why couldn't we form a sort of partnership?"

"And me marry her?"

"Pardon, me, I hadn't gone so far as to suggest that, Glad."

"But I have gone so far as to consider it seriously," I said. "I believe honestly that it would be to Henry Jarndyce's advantage if he should go halvers with her in the mine; that is, if she's what she pretends she is."

Prothro's blue-grey eyes grew cold. "Gladney," he said, "you haven't contemplated a further step, have you? You wouldn't turn——"

"Listen, Prothro; I'm not Nelson. And I'm Henry Jarndyce's guest here, as much as if I were in his dining-room in New York. Do you think his plate would be safe with me in his house?"

Prothro laughed again, his big, hearty laugh that was so good to hear.

"But, Glad," he mused aloud, "if she's all she pretends she is, she wouldn't go partners with Henry Jarndyce nor any other millionaire in the world. There's no half-way course open to you. It's either marry her and desert us, or it's stick to us thru and thru, and risk your life in doing it."

"I'll stick to you," I said. "The woman is an adventuress, whatever else she is, and her disgusting affair with Nelson is more than I can contemplate. You see, altho poor and an artist, I still have some little shreds of self-respect."

"Then do this," said Prothro. "Go and at least pretend to paint her. Put my proposition before her and temporize as long as possible. Meanwhile we may have to fight these Aztec brigands any day."

The next morning at daybreak I went with Prothro and Mora to inspect our machinery. That was the first opportunity I had had to see it at close range. There was a great centrifugal pump with two carloads of piping. There was a great dynamo and several motors, a big Westinghouse engine, a giant winch and drum with a quantity of cable for lifting the buckets, a crusher, and about a dozen centrifugal washing pans; in fact, a complete gold mining outfit costing perhaps a cool half million dollars. There were some other "tools and machinery" in large packing cases, of what nature I did not inquire.

All this had been tied up and useless for days, and now this morning Prothro, with his permit from Mexico City, was anxious to begin to reload it at once to his narrow gauge road for Tieximal. The gang was ready and apparently waiting to go to work.

Prothro spoke quietly to Bourke, who had been appointed foreman, and Bourke stepped out and called: "Come on, boys, let's get to reloadin' this stuff."

Not a man budged from his place.

"Come on up here, fellows, we'll skid this engine across first."

Not a man moved in his tracks. Bourke looked at Prothro for instruction, and Barnette, who had started up the street to go get some sleep, wheeled and walked back.

"Men," asked Prothro, "what's the matter?"

"We've struck," said a big fellow named Spinks.

"Struck for what?"

"Ten dollars a day, gold, and our equal share in the company's takin's at the mine."

Prothro stepped fearlessly in among them. "Say, look here," he said. "You haven't worked out your passage yet. You'll work that out before you strike or I'll clap the last one of you in the chain gang."

"Just try it," shouted Spinks, and Prothro landed him a blow to the point of the jaw that sent him sprawling backward across a pile of scrap iron.

There was a rush. Six men made at Prothro from all directions. But Barnette jumped in and engaged two of them. Bourke, in spite of his bad arm,

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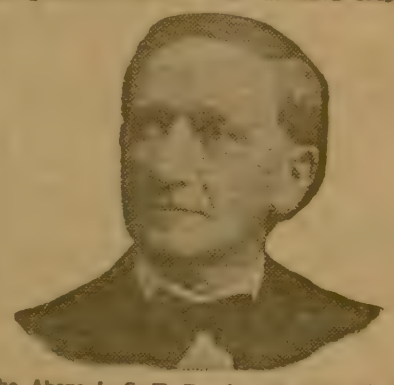

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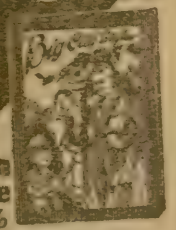

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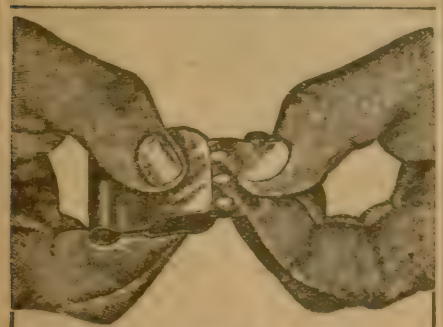

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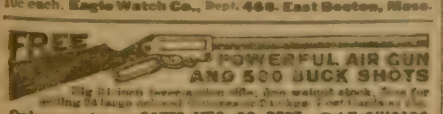
FREE  **POWERFUL AIR GUN AND 500 BUCK SHOTS**

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took on two more, and Prothro looked after the other two. Mora drew a pistol and stood the others off, and I followed suit. The battle among the ten men lasted for some moments. There were panting and curses, and a world of punishment for all.

The curses were mostly directed at Battling Bourke.

"Turncoat, traitor, wot made you sell out?" This was the burden of the vilification flung at the ex-prizefighter.

But after a time the seven assailants drew off defeated—all save two, who were completely knocked out. All that were still on their legs drew off and held a long consultation.

"Why don't you let them go or lock them up and employ native labor to do the work?" I asked Barnette.

"That's the trouble," he swore. "We've tried to hire native laborers; but there's evidently a boycott against us—Sifert and Seriano's work."

"No, that woman's," I instructed him. "She's really what she claimed to be, or partly so—get Prothro to tell you—she's got a part of the native population under her thumb."

"I'd like to break her neck," said Barnette, panting.

While we were speaking a stalwart bronze brute, who had stood idly smoking a cigarette during the fight, edged up to me. "What are you doing here?" he asked in Spanish.

"I work for Jarndyce and Company of New York," I said.

"Well, you won't work for them long unless you keep faith with the Princess Ynez Tchacalca," he hissed truculently. At that moment I recognized him as one of the twenty, one of those who had refused to bow before me the day before.

As he stalked off I followed after and touched him on the elbow. "Pardon me, senor," I said. "I now recognize you. Know then that I am prepared to keep faith with the Princess Ynez Tchacalca, that the representative of my cousin in New York, who is rich enough to buy this province and strong enough to crush the beautiful princess, is sending me to her today for a conference with her and will offer to go into an honorable partnership with her to develop the mine at Tie imal."

"The Princess Tchacalca cannot stoop to form a partnership," he growled, as he shambled on down the railroad yards.

When I told Prothro a few minutes later about my passage of words with this sinner he said: "You'd better be on your P's and Q's. We don't care to lose a good man before we start. Don't fail to keep your appointment with her this morning. I got your painting materials for you in Mexico City as I promised." And I hurried away from the railroad yards to get ready to keep my perilous appointment.

CHAPTER XI.

HAVE you ever been at the breaking of a strike? It is a sordid business at best. Even when the striker is entirely in the wrong with his demands, the strikebreaker, like the detective and the spy, is looked upon as a sort of pariah. Certainly the strikebreakers Prothro and Barnette managed to employ in the colorful city of Guanajuato were a scurvy lot. They were for the most part the plug uglies of the town, Mexicans unattached to any hacienda or to any overlord, men without any sort of religious or political faith. They worked for the hated "gringoes," wherefore they were taboo for all self-respecting Mexicans in that city where American and English and German machinery is equally despised, and where the only ice in summer is the snow-ice carried on the back of a peon from the white mountain summits miles and miles away—a city, which, in spite of its many churches, is still pagan at heart and will remain so for many generations to come.

We learned that the natives had names for us. Barnette was "the panther;" Prothro was "the demon of the railroad," because he had built the first railroad into the city; little Mora was "the apostate;" Battling Bourke was "el toro," the bull, and I was—well, the name they called me by is not translatable into polite English—let us say, lady killer.

We kept just seven workers of our old lot; and strange as it may seem, the seven men we kept were the seven that had made the attack and been whipped that first morning. The others we sent thru the political influence of Mora to work out the price of their passage on a government railroad in Zacatecas.

I went that first morning and met the princess at the old Mexican's, where we did a disappearing act into her underground palace, but no sooner had I begun to try to sketch her than I began to complain that the light was bad. I told her I could never hope to reproduce in that light the little flecks of gold in her deep-brown, liquid eyes, the faint half-flush that died along her throat, the delicate dove-toned shadow beneath her chin. Before I was half thru with the first sketch I threw down my brushes in despair; and I ended by making her agree to let me come to her residence every day to paint her instead of to that place.

She also agreed to come to a conference and meet Prothro and Mora and me, but nothing came of our tentatively offered partnership. It was just as Prothro had said, she scorned a partnership with anybody, and, I think, actually convinced Prothro that she was what she claimed to be. I must state frankly that she gained in dignity in the eyes of all of us during these interviews. Had it not been for her manner of conducting herself on board the ship and the innate baseness of character that she had revealed there, I should have been more than pleased to have taken her back to New York and laid her claims before my cousin, and who knows but that I might have gone still farther.

Her house—rented or not, I cannot say—was a dignified old place of adobe and stucco, with an interior filled with art objects and luxurious hangings and rugs, and the finest of furniture. Besides, the lesser domestics she kept there an old duenna, deaf as a hitching post and ugly as only an old Mexican can be, and a Japanese butler of the fawning, shifty, self-important sort. She gave me one of her servants for a valet, gave me a suite of rooms and a latch key, so that I had the entree to at least a part of her house at any hour of the day or night.

All members of our party were invited there to dinner one time or another. Prothro and Barnette came, but little Mora never did. He confided to me afterward that he stayed away for fear of being poisoned.

It was during a little tete-a-tete across her tea table that I first learned why she had gone so far as she had with Nelson. It seems that her agent in New York had informed her that Jarndyce's cousin was sailing with our party, but that the agent himself had gotten the names mixed up and represented Nelson as that cousin. For the rest, she was a woman of mean and small soul, utterly ignoble, and Prothro and Barnette and I had taught her all the dignity she knew.

THINGS occurred in that house that I shall certainly not relate here; but I will say that I withstood every temptation, because I knew that a man once involved in an intrigue with a Latin-American woman all too soon is plunged into an abyss where he loses all sense of honor and self-respect.

And I learned as the days went by that Prothro was not a man to be trifled with. My cousin Jarndyce was indeed a caliph, and Prothro was his satrap. He was absolutely implacable, while being at the same time the justest man that ever dealt with a hard situation. As for little Mora, he was the diplomat of the party. Without him we could never have survived.

We broke the strike, as I have said, with the ragtag of the town, men so slow and lazy and unskilful that they

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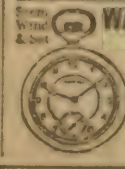

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HAWKEYE SEED CO. Dept. 533 Independence Iowa

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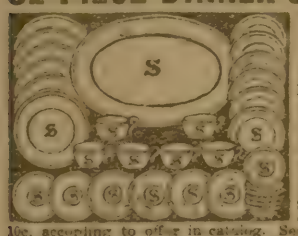

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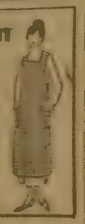

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were hardly worth their feed. The white men who had remained with us were each put in in the same superior capacity. Spinks was a skilled mechanic, and in a lesser sense so were Hattaway and McCarty; a man named Jones acted as timekeeper, and three more men were put in as gang foremen with good pay. Mora, besides being Barnette's diplomatic representative, was assistant engineer to Prothro, and I was promoted to Nelson's place as bookkeeper and cashier. With our new crew we transferred half our load to the narrow gauge train, and Hattaway and Mora, with the three foremen, were left behind to continue the reloading while the rest of us got aboard the train for the sixteen-mile run up to Tieximal. As soon as we were outside the city limits Prothro and Barnette came along the train with Springfield rifles.

"Know how to shoot from the hip?" he asked me as he handed me one. "You'd better not try to use that collarbone yet awhile."

"Yes, I can fire from the hip."

He gave a rifle to each white man of the party. Then to my astonishment he set up a tripod machine gun on top of a boxcar a little back of the locomotive, where it could be made to sweep the entire train and the right of way on each side. That road consists of ninety per cent of single-loops, double-loops, tunnels, and switchbacks. There are thirteen tunnels in the sixteen miles, and at one point the road can be seen four stories high, one track above the other. It gave me an idea of the importance of the Veta de Oro mine when I realized that Jarndyce had built the road to haul coal and machinery and supplies up to the mine, and crude ore down. At the time of the strike of our men in Guanajuato there had also been a strike of the ten employes on the road, and only the prompt punishment of our strikers had warned the others to go back to work. So precarious was the whole labor situation that the morning after the strike, Prothro had sent Aguaros back to New York to explain the whole situation to Jarndyce and bring back with him a sufficient number of dependable men to carry on the work.

Our train that day was only nine cars and a caboose in length on account of the shortness of dead ends of the first switchback. But heavily loaded with machinery and piping as the cars were, it was all the little geared engine could do to pull them slowly up the long and curving grades. After two hours of climbing we made the run into the first dead end of the switchback, and, having inspected the engines and brakes, backed slowly back and into the second dead end. I thought I had seen wild and picturesque scenery, but I had never seen anything like that up there. We stopped for ten minutes in the second dead end, and then at a snail's pace and with panting engine and creaking flanges we started climbing up to the top of the pass deeply snow-filled, even in July.

I was standing on a flat car loaded with casings, and as no ambush had developed and no danger seemed to threaten at our slow pace, I had forgotten my business for the moment in the contemplation of the wild and wonderful landscape, when suddenly I became aware that something was wrong. The train had stopped and was beginning to move slowly backward. I wondered if we could be in a second switchback. Prothero had told me of only one on the near side of the pass. But, looking forward, I discovered the cause of our trouble. The locomotive was loose and was racing with all speed up the grade. I could have jumped to safety during the first moment before the train had gained speed in its retrograde movement, but I was too busy watching Prothro to think of my own welfare. He threw down his rifle and leaped to the machine gun, and the next minute its sharp staccato was mingled with the rapid exhaust of the flying engine. At the same moment I saw three men jump—they were our three native brakemen.

Barnette swung his rifle to cover one of them and began to fire. I tried to cover a second one, but he had jumped off on the outer side of the curve, and by this time the train was gaining so much speed and rocking so violently that I fired to no purpose. Now every railroad man knows that the Westinghouse airbrake is so rigged that the breaking loose of the engine or the breaking of the train at any point will at once, by releasing the pressure in the train pipe and opening the cocks of the compressed air tanks under each car, snap on the brakes all along the line. On these mountain roads the best type of brakes and the most modern safety devices are used; so I knew that our brakes should have snapped on at once had they not been skilfully juggled. Instead the shoes were hanging idle and our string of cars were gaining by leaps and bounds.

"Here is trickery," I thought to myself. "This is plain murder!"

It was too late to try to jump; so I imitated Bourke and Spinks, and using the barrel of my rifle for a lever began to turn the brakewheel as far around as I could. As for Prothro, he was raking every bunch of pinol trees with his machine gun, apparently oblivious of our danger. Barnette drew out a long knife and knelt down as if to cut the train hose; but Prothro left off his firing and began to motion to him coolly not to do so.

"Does he want us all killed?" I asked myself.

Then I saw Prothro climb carefully down from the swaying boxcar and take the knife from Barnette.

"What's the matter with 'em?" shouted McCarty, who had staggered to my side and stood holding on to me. "Don't they know we'll go to hell on the next curve?"

I only shook my head. I could not in the least understand it, but I knew that whatever Prothro was doing it was the best for us all.

Our hero's adventure in the underground crypt of the sun worshipers was exciting enough, but just what is in store for brave Prothro and his men, other than a swift and horrible death to all on board the runaway train, the story editor won't attempt to explain. Ledger readers wouldn't like it if he did. The concluding installment, next week, will solve all the mysteries.

The Voodoo

(Continued From Page 2)

he regarded me as sick and unbalanced. And meanwhile that vision of myself in stories I told him, it was only because a coffin simply floated in the air before me, as if it were imprinted on the retina of my eye. The Voodoo had got me in its toils, that much was plain to me.

Like all the other victims of the Voodoo, I was obsessed with a determination to go back to their gatherings and come face to face with their priests so as to buy immunity from the Voodoo curse. I think Etoile understood my malady better than Boudreaux did. She insisted that I leave the city and go on a visit to my mother in north Louisiana, out of reach of the New Orleans witch doctors. And this I agreed to do—to fool her.

I BOUGHT a ticket home, got on a northbound Texas & Pacific train, but only to double back into the city by river packet from Planquemine and hide in the slums, there to await the call for the next Voodoo gathering. I had not long to wait, for that drumming up which meant that the Voodoo was calling his votaries together. I had managed to remove a good deal of the henna stain from the visible portions of my body, but I now restained my face and neck, hands and wrists with the stuff and dressed myself as near like the original Fakey Jake as possible. I had on me considerable money and I meant to go to this Voodoo gathering and buy immunity outright; but now as the call came I shrank from the thought of meeting the priests.

As in a nightmare dream some unseen force impelled me forward, yet my feet dragged and I got nowhere. And as I slunk along the streets the drumming grew and grew upon me till it fairly raised the hair on my head. I approached the source from which it seemed to come and presently I saw a dark figure slink down an alleyway and turn at a back door into the old Hotel Royal. I maneuvered for a place from which I could watch that doorway and see if others went in. Two more did so and I started

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Auto Puzzle Dept. 6, W. D. Boyce Co., 500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

to follow. Then suddenly I was torn between two desires. I thought: "How easy it would be to call out the police and catch them all here in the midst of their horrid rites!" But at once the fearful thought assailed me: "But the power that is leagued with them cannot be jailed nor chained nor held by human force!"

The drumming continued to throb in my ears, in my very brain, and I was impelled forward to the door. The keeper admitted me. I went forward along a narrow, crooked passage and finally came to a straight drop downward. I made the descent, and then I recognized my queer surroundings. I was one story below the street level and in the passage that led to my wine vault. Altho not a sound came up or out from below I knew the Voodoo had found my secret hiding-place and made it his, and doubtless the wildest of wild orgies was now going forward below.

But now a fear greater than any that had formerly possessed me took hold of me. I had been a fool to venture this far; I was simply putting myself into the hands of these demons. But how to escape? The guard at the door would certainly not let me out. Then I remembered that the dead end of this passage must certainly lead back to the entrance I had formerly used. I turned and crept down the black passageway. Rats scurried underfoot. I had a creepy sensation that zuki snakes were crawling below and writhing in festoons from the beams above. I would not flash on my light for fear of beholding these horrors; yet all the time I was seeing them anyway in a sort of hazy green light that was of my imagining. My shuffling feet struck against a heavy beam and I stooped down and picked it up. It was not over three feet long, and somehow I felt safer and more balanced and sane with it firmly grasped in my hands.

A moment more of stumbling thru the dark and then I came to a dead wall. I caught the beam firmly in the manner of "Present arms" and brought it upward with all the force I could put into the thrust. At first it seemed I was having no effect upon the ceiling above me, and I imagined the noise I was making would certainly bring a guard to me before many moments had passed. But I cautiously switched on the flashlight and searched the space above me. Then picking what looked like a vulnerable spot I kept punching away, till the tiling above gave way and some clattering down in a shower of dust.

In a moment I had made the hole large enough that I could scramble out, and sure enough I found myself on the floor of the rotunda of the old hotel. I figured that this pillar had always been a false one, and that the Voodoo priests had merely had it removed and retiled the floor below it to fool me. I still had my scantling on my shoulder as I hastened out into the sweet air of the streets, and I must have made an outlandish figure with my Swami dress covered with cobwebs and a beam like that for a weapon.

At a corner two blocks away I came plump upon my blind time-seeker. He must have known my walk, but evidently his occult powers did not go so far as to tell him I was armed and desperate. In his pulling voice he asked me to look at his watch and tell him the time of night. I leaped back and averted my eyes from the object he drew from his pocket. Then I swung my beam in a wide arc over my head and brought it down upon his cranium with all the force in my weakened arms. He didn't even moan. He crumpled down on the banquette and fell backward, his horrible sightless eyes staring up at me.

"Oh, Lord!" I gasped. "Now I've added murder to my long list of crimes and blunders."

CHAPTER IX.

TO THE MUSIC OF AUTOMATICS.

THE change that took place in me when I had hit that blind beggar was more startling than anything that had occurred to me since the beginning of my strange adventure. In the batting of an eyelash my mind cleared up. I was as sane, as free from hallucinations, as I was the day I first stained my body with henna. I thought clearly and rapidly. I now knew the gathering place of these fiends; it would be an easy matter to trap them. I ran into a little corner saloon, rushed behind the bar and snatched up the receiver of a telephone without so much as a "by your leave" to the barkeeper. I shouted a number into the transmitter and stood rattling the hook.

"Wasp office, Boudreaux on the wire," came old Boud's voice to me in just a moment.

"My thirst is quenched!" I called.

Boud gave a huge gasp. "But, my Lord, man, I thought you were away off in north Louisiana in Bossier Parish."

"Listen, Boud, there's no time for a palaver about me. I've come out of it. I'm as right as a rock; and, listen here. I've got 'em dead to rights. Rush two squads of police down to the old Hotel Royal. Don't lose a minute. I'll be waiting within half a block of the entrance. Come yourself and bring two good automatics."

"Coming!" boomed the big, resolute voice of old Boud, and I heard his receiver fall into the hook.

I next called the Charity Hospital. "Rush ambulance down to corner of Bourbon and Sainte Anne; a blind man has been knocked down and perhaps killed."

I recognized Doctor Corrigan's voice on the wire. "Listen, Corrigan," I shouted, "it's the blind beggar that hypnotized me. I clumped 'im with a beam."

"Shut up, you idiot!" growled Corrigan. "Don't you know this thing leaks?"

"Well, what I wanted to tell you was: Keep 'im unconscious. If you don't he'll get me under his power again. Yes, make haste; rush the ambulance."

The hospital ambulance and two patrol wagons galloped upon the scene at about the same moment. I swung onto the first of the two patrol wagons and explained the situation to the chief of police. The chief had the thing down pat in about six words. It seemed he had studied the old hotel previously, thinking it might be a meeting place of the Voodoo. Both wagons pulled up to the curb, and a moment later a man with a club and a gun was stationed at every exit of the battered caravansary, and a special strong-arm squad was placed at the entrance I had made and at the side door where the votaries had been going in.

The six of us—Boudreaux, the chief, a sergeant, two plainclothes men, and myself—armed with a pair of automatics each, dropped down into the little well where the false pillar had stood and proceeded cautiously along the subterranean runway. As we battered in the door and

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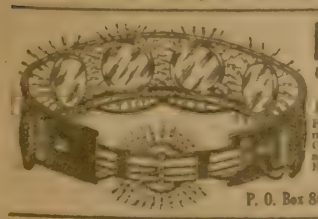

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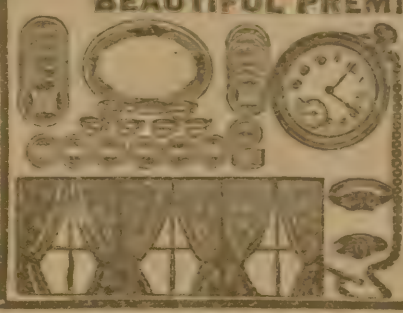

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started to descend a flight of steps into the real hellhole, we were met by a roar of firearms and the spatter of bullets all about us. We leaped forward, for we knew our best tactics was a sudden rush.

And such a sight we saw! The votaries of the Voodoo for the most part prostrated themselves on the cellar floor; but I must say in justice to the courage of the leaders, they fought like demons. The ancient negress, that she-devil with the eyes of a spider, snatched one knife after another from a girdle of them at her waist and threw them at us, throwing deftly from the point. One of them whizzed past my left ear and buried itself in the thick neck of a plainclothes man just behind me. He died in convulsions ten minutes later.

THE big preacher whom I had imprisoned there—magnificent lion that he was—stood up boldly and took toll of our crowd till his automatic jammed and then leaped at us over the prostrate bodies of his victims, brandishing a great pair of steel knucks. It took two or three shots in the face and head to stop his onrush. And his pal, the big beast who had swallowed the snake, did equally well. He was emptying a big navy revolver at us when Boudreaux got him in his shooting arm, and even then he rushed at us with his fists. He was making good progress with his great sledgehammer blows when the chief gave him the butt of his riot gun in the neck—a thing he had also just done to our knife-throwing priestess. The fight was over.

Besides the man who had been struck with the poisoned knife, two others of our party were badly wounded, and all of us had superficial scratches. I convinced the chief afterward that the use of chlorine gas would have been really less expensive in human life and more merciful all around in a situation like that. But as soon as we had secured the three leaders the others were as tame as sheep. We soon had them all handcuffed and tied by a long rope, and then we brought them out by the side entrance. Thereupon there was weeping and wailing on the part of one or two white women in the crowd, who claimed great respectability and pleaded with us not to take them to the night court. So we released a few of these on their own recognizance.

The personnel of that mob was indeed a thing of wonder. For the most part they were quadroons, but there were seven white persons present, and three of them represented three of the so-called best families of the Crescent City.

The negro preacher died before we got him to the police station, and the next day we sent the other two arch conspirators to Baton Rouge for safekeeping till they could be legally tried.

That week we gave the blind man, who was slowly recovering, the third degree. Dr. Corrigan assured him that he was dying and asked him to confess to his part in these nefarious crimes. His confession is one of the most startling things that the police records of the Creole City has to show. He dictated it to Dr. Corrigan and Mr. Boudreaux as here reproduced:

I have been blind from birth. For years after I was grown I lived an honest life, then I began crooked ways. Later I learned that I could mesmerize people by causing them to look at bright objects and at the same time fixing my mind on what I wanted them to do or think. I operated on the vaudeville stage for a long time and traveled all over Europe and in Canada and Central America, as well as in nearly every state in the Union. In Central America I learned of the Voodoo worship, and a Haitian negro gambler and myself first went into it. We didn't make much money because there was very little money in the country. Later I plied the trade in Cuba and Jamaica. Two years later I came to New Orleans with the man you now have in prison and with the negress, old Pixie Delaterre. Here we found the preacher, the Rev. Henry Oldmeyer, operating on a small scale and using his protracted meeting to send people to the Voodoo den. He had a sorry outfit, one or two old women and a few chicken snakes. We came and introduced the real thing, and the four of us made a fine living out of it. There isn't any great big money to be made out of it, because the people that patronize it seldom have very much money.

We had hoped to sell our activities to a foreign government and was on a deal with a spy to turn the negroes against the Government and organize a band of killers, when along came this Fakey Jake, and upset our plans. That is why we hated him so bad and tried so hard to get rid of him. First we put up a fake fight in his booth and tried to kill him accidentally. Then we put zuki snakes in his show case. Then I hypnotized all his helpers and caused them to desert him, after the first was killed.

An old map of the French Quarter streets having come into my possession, purely by accident, I remembered that my former partner had explained that it very accurately located what we believed to be a wine vault under the old Hotel Royal. With the help of two of my associates we soon found Oldmeyer, the preacher, in this deep, underground dungeon, by hearing his calls for help.

We put a snake in front of Fakey Jake's place by hanging it by a string to a fishing-pole and pushing it up thru a crack in the wharf. That same night we operated a little coffin and a wax figure of Fakey with a string and nearly scared him to death, I guess. Anyway, with the aid of my watch crystals—the secret powers of which I never will explain—I am convinced that he had some awful experiences and sufferings while I kept him hypnotized. One of our men also introduced typhoid germs into Fakey's milk and ice water while he was running his booth on Chartres street.

I have nothing more to say. I never committed any murders. Oldmeyer and Pixie and that Haitian nigger did all the killing.

As a result of this confession secret agents of the United States Government set to work to find the secret agent who had offered to buy the activities of the Voodoo. Also as a result of it I was inoculated for typhoid, and my case, which had been a walking case from the first, was very much lightened.

A month later when the blind man was completely well, old Pixie and the Haitian thug were brought back to New Orleans for trial. But soon the trial was involving so many respectable families in a scandalous way that it had to be quashed as a public proceeding. However, the police and the Government secret service men proceeded with a sort of star chamber trial, and they unearthed a mass of data that will certainly be of use in running down any similar plot in the future.

Old Pixie and the Haitian were convicted of murder for resisting arrest and murdering an officer of the law, and the blind man was sentenced to be hanged for his part in the numerous murders which the cult had committed. Old Pixie died of poison in her cell when she knew she was going to be hanged. The Haitian escaped, and so only the blind man met his fate on a gallows at Baton Rouge.

During all the trials and investigations Etoile sat close to my side, and her presence helped me to carry the thing thru; for I was still a sick man and at times I was in deadly fear lest my hallucinations might return upon

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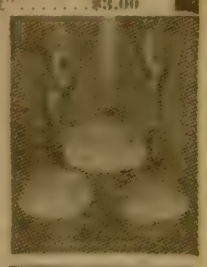

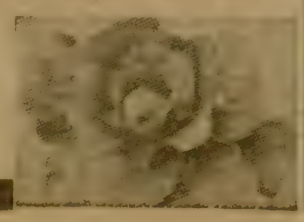

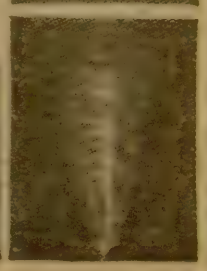

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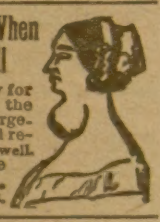

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me. I have given up detective work, for the present at least. An amateur is constantly in too much danger and a single blunder may cost any detective his life. Futhermore, I am leaving the Crescent City and have been assigned to a trade journal in New York. Etoile and I are to be married in June and are going to spend our honeymoon at Thousand Islands, far from the haunts of the Voodoo and the plots of foreign spies.

The End.

Coming: A CANNIBAL STORY
Full Announcements Later

Three Men Named Barnes

(Continued From Page 13)

headquarters, and Ziesniss escorted them to his office. There, after a few minutes delay, were brought jaundiced, limping Hans Kirrstetter, lean Mr. Wolstenholme, and Foo Gat, snarling and mouthing, all his Oriental apathy gone.

"That Simpson guy and them two foreigners—Kirrstetter's servants, they said they was, is in the hospital," the police sergeant informed the chief.

"Very well, Keenan. They are not needed. These men will tell all they know, which is sufficient. You first, Kirrstetter."

"Yes, Hans," cried Burgomaster Stauffer imploringly. "Tell me—who swore to your innocence—that you did not kill Barnes."

"I did not kill him," said Kirrstetter flatly.

Ziesniss uttered an exclamation of incredulity. "What! If you did not, who did?"

"Listen, and I will explain," said the gasthouse keeper.

"After the armistice I took the place at Wollenstein in order to thoroly efface myself from the view of the Berlin and Vienna police, with whom I was not—popular. The police at Prague had often shared in my schemes and successes, so when the news of the murder reached them they took it for granted that I committed it, but did nothing until they were sure that I was safely away. I understand that they made some trouble for my friend, Stauffer, when he went to them."

The burgomaster grew choleric with rage at the thought.

"What of the murder?" Ziesniss demanded, impatiently.

"I had agreed to assist Harper in his plans, so I tricked Jack Barnes—of whom we had kept excellent trace—to come to my inn. The pretense was that I had some diamonds, which I desired to smuggle out of the country. His chauffeur was in our pay, and it was the chauffeur who killed him in a deliberately provoked quarrel. Then my servants, who had spent much time in Africa with me and had imbibed some savage customs, nailed him to the wall. It was grotesque, barbarous, but"—he shrugged—"it was done. We then slipped out of the rear door before the entrance of the honorable Stauffer, and made, as you Americans call it, our getaway. That is all."

"It is not all," Stauffer burst out violently. "Why the assault upon me in Bremen? Why was I carried to the steamship Kroonman afterward?"

Kirrstetter laughed. "The perfect criminal," he said, "should ignore the human element—be ready to sacrifice his best beloved as quickly as his worst enemy. That I should not do because I am not a perfect criminal. I had been treated kindly by you, Herr Stauffer. When my servants caught you, and demanded your death, I could not quite bring myself to it. So I placed you on your ship, and sent you on to America. For your heart I had the highest regard, but for your head—poof!"

The detective chief swung suddenly around on Foo Gat, his mild features contorted suddenly into a mold that was almost fiendish.

"I'll give you just one chance to tell me the truth," he barked. "Out with it."

THE once defiant Chinaman broke down and gibbered a confession. It appeared that he had been sent to San Francisco by Harper for the purpose of putting a man named Barnes out of the way. They had lured him to their dive with a message purporting to be from Wolstenholme. The actual murder had been committed by Foo Gat's brother, hidden behind the screen.

"That's all," Ziesniss snapped. "Take 'em away—except him." He pointed contemptuously at Wolstenholme. "There isn't much he can tell us—except to satisfy our curiosity," he added. "I got a line on him, Barnes, after you left here this afternoon. He really is a lawyer, tho a dilettante rather than a worker. He's cacked on the subject of detective work, and it is his ambition to become a sort of Sherlock Holmes. I don't know what supposed crime he was working on when he ingratiated himself with that gang of criminals—it doesn't matter. So far as we can learn, he has done nothing actually crooked, so I suppose we'll have to let him go after we use him as a witness. Personally, I think an asylum rather than a jail is a fitting abode for him."

Wolstenholme's pasty skin took on a purplish hue, and he wiggled uneasy like a naughty boy caught in a jam closet. Jed turned on him.

"I'd like to know why you brought those fake wills to me," he said. "In short, what was the big idea?"

"It—it was one of my detective plans," Wolstenholme stammered. "I thought that you were at the bottom of the affair to get the three Barnes fellows out of the way, and I thought that the will scheme would eventually make you show your hand. I am rich, so the thousand dollars I gave you meant little to me——"

"Did you think of what your scheme meant to me? I gave up my position to follow this will-o'-the-wisp——"

"But don't you see," the lawyer broke out, "it isn't a will o' the wisp at all, really. Those men were your cousins. They had no other relatives, and they died intestate. You will inherit the millions those oil lands will bring. There is no doubt in my mind about that——"

Jed stared. So did the rest. And,

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Send only 25c and we ship these best ever made Rubber Boots. A world beating bargain—if you don't say so just return the boots. Price slashed to less than ½ cost to make—because we have left in stock only the sizes given below and want to close them out quick.

Pure Gum Rubber Hip Boots

No better rubber ever put in boots. Lined with strongest, closest woven drill—the **best wearing lining made. The boots are guaranteed perfect.** Reinforced at knee by double thickness. Extra strong tap sole. Heels moulded on and nailed—**will not come off.** Strap just below knee to hold leg firmly. Also extra and **free** best sole leather straps to go around ankles. (These straps worth $1 alone, but you get them free). Sizes 8-9-10-11-12, no half sizes. Wide widths. Only 25c with order to cover postage. Regular $8 boots, but you pay only $3.48 on arrival. **Order one size larger than shoe you wear. Order No. AX6000.** Mark X in [ ] in coupon below.

Knee Boots

Made of same best grade rubber and in same way as the Hip Boots except that they are knee length and have no straps. Sizes 8, 9 and 10, no half sizes. Wide widths. **Order 1 size larger than shoe you wear.** Only 25c with order to pay postage. Pay only $3.25 on arrival. Easily worth $6. **Order No. AX6001.** Put X in [ ] in coupon below.

Now Take advantage of this rare chance and buy TWO pairs. Send only 25c to cover the postage on **each pair ordered.** Pay no more until boots arrive. Back they come and back your money goes to you if not satisfied after examination. When this lot is gone you never can get them again for anywhere near this price. Get the coupon into the mail now. Mark X in [ ] in coupon to show which you want, hip or knee boots. Dealers' orders not accepted.

Order One Size Larger Than Shoe You Wear

Free Pair of very best sole leather straps to strap over instep and around ankle to hold boot on firmly when working in heavy clay or mud. Good for harness straps also. Worth $1.00 but **FREE** with the hip boots.

Leonard-Morton & Co.
Dept. 8530 Chicago, Ill.

Send the Pure Gum Rubber Boots marked X in [ ] below. When they arrive I will pay bargain price for hip boots or for knee boots. If not satisfied, will return the boots and you will refund my money. I enclose 25c for postage (50c if 2 pair are ordered).

☐ No. AX6000 Hip Boots $3.48 ☐ No. AX6001 Knee Boots $3.25

Size..... (1 size larger than shoe you wear)

Name.....

Address.....

City..... State.....

Leonard-Morton & Co.
Dept. 8530 Chicago, Ill.

Free for 10 Days' Wear

Send no money—just your name and address. We will then send you one of these genuine Tifnite gems to wear for 10 days. Note its dazzling brilliancy. Put it alongside the costliest diamond. If you can tell the Tifnite from a real diamond send it back.

Like a REAL Diamond

A genuine Tifnite has all the fire and flash of a real diamond. And like a real diamond, every Tifnite is set in a beautiful **solid gold** mounting.

Gents' Ring No. 1
Genuine Tifnite gem. Almost 1 karat in weight. Solid gold mtg. Wide flat band. 8-prong setting to hold stone securely.

Ladies' Ring No. 2
Newest style mounting. Solid gold and hand-made, guaranteed. Genuine Tifnite gem, almost 1 karat weight, in exquisitely rich setting.

Order Quick We have only 5,000 of these rings to quickly introduce ourselves to new customers. Prices specially low, terms very easy. Everything on pre-war basis. Send strip of paper fitting around second joint of finger for your ring size. We will send you your choice of these Tifnite rings. When it arrives, deposit $3.60 with postmaster. Wear it 10 days at our expense. If anyone can tell it from diamond, send it back and we will refund your deposit. If you decide to buy merely pay the balance at $3.00 per month until the special price of $12.50 is paid. Write today.

THE TIFNITE COMPANY
511 S. Plymouth Ct., Dept. 1270, Chicago, Ill.

ECZEMA
CAN BE CURED
Free Proof To You

J. C. Hutzell, R. P.
DRUGGIST

All I want is your name and address so I can send you a free trial treatment. I want you just to try this treatment—that's all—**just try it.** That's my only argument.

I've been in the Retail Drug Business for 20 years. I am Secretary of the Indiana State Board of Pharmacy and President of the Retail Druggists' Association. Nearly everyone in Fort Wayne knows me and knows about my successful treatment. Over **fourteen thousand five hundred** Men, Women and Children outside of Fort Wayne have, according to their own statements, been cured by this treatment since I first made this offer public.

If you have **Eczema, Itch, Salt Rheum, Tetter**—never mind how bad—**my treatment has cured the worst cases I ever saw—give me a chance to prove my claim.**

Send me your name and address on the coupon below and get the trial treatment I want to send you FREE. The wonders accomplished in your own case will be **proof.**

CUT AND MAIL TODAY

J. C. HUTZELL, Druggist, 3916 West Main St., Fort Wayne, Ind.

Please send without cost or obligation to me your Free Proof Treatment.

Name..... Age.....

Post Office..... State.....

Street and No. .....

gradually, it began to dawn on them that what Wolstenholme said was undoubtedly true—that he, Jed Barnes, was a potential millionaire. When the ex-sheriff of Casawauga County realized it he uttered a whoop of joy, and swept Connie Harper into his arms.

"It won't be beans and johnnycake for you now, dear," he cried, "but automobiles and yachts and everything."

She snuggled deeper into his embrace.

"I don't care, Jed, really I don't—so—so long as you're with me."

Ziesniss pretended to be vitally interested in something on his desk. Wolstenholme went to the window, and looked out into the darkness. But Burgomaster Stauffer frankly stared at them, his jaw drooping, a rich color ebbing and flowing in his florid face. Jed, turning his head, caught the fascinated stare, and he suddenly remembered one thing that this flood of confessions had not cleared up.

"Mr. Stauffer," he said, "a little earlier in the evening I asked you what you were doing in Sheppard and Company's. You evaded an answer for some reason. Will you tell me now?"

"Yes," smiled the Schleswigger, "I was afraid that you would laugh at me then, but not now—no, you cannot laugh at me now. I want—you see, I'm going to marry Lena, my housekeeper, and I went into that shop to buy a ring for her. Tomorrow I buy my steamer tickets, and go back to tell her!"

The End.

Hot Off the Jokesmith's Anvil

A Common Trouble.

"I got a letter from my husband from Paris."

"How is he getting on with the French people?"

"He says they are very nice and polite, but they don't seem to understand their own language."

An Experience.

"Don't you believe a soft answer turns away wrath?"

"What makes you doubt it?"

"My wife asked me what I thought of her biscuits and she got hopping mad when I told her they tasted like mush."

The Thing to Do.

As the boss entered the factory the employes were hurling tomatoes.

"Stop it!" he yelled. "Can that stuff."

Drawing Attention.

"Her low cut back caused a sensation in the ballroom."

"It wasn't cut lower than some others."

"No, but she forgot to remove a porous plaster she was wearing."

Brain Teasers.

Enigma.

37—My first is in California but not in Arizona.

My second is in Arizona but not in Alabama.

My third is in Alabama but not in Utah.

My fourth is in Utah but not in Montana.

My fifth is in Montana but not in Nebraska.

My sixth is in Nebraska but not in Kentucky.

My seventh is in Kentucky but not in Texas.

My eighth is in Texas but not in Wyoming.

My whole is a great discovery of the fifteenth century.

Jumbled States.

38—1, Anirivig; 2, Enesetnes; 3, Alauisnio; 4. Aknasars; 5, Apaninenlysv; 6, Olhoakam; 7, Rodlacoo; 8, Bakenars; 9, Lafacorini.

Acrostic.

39—1. To shed tears.
2. An Old Testament character.
3. The largest member of our solar system.
4. To speak.

Primals spell a point of the compass; finals the color which often appears there.

Five-word Square.

40—1. A girl's name.
2. Pertaining to the law.
3. A person acting for another in a business matter.
4. A large cooking stove.
5. To change.

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES.

33—Double Beheadings.

1. S-P-ray. 2. S-W-allow. 3. W-H-eel. 4. T-R-ash. 5. P-R-ice. 6. P-R-each.

34—Hourglass Puzzle.

D E C K S
A L E
O
A C E
L I K E N

35—Charade.

Basket.

36—A Bird Ladder.

Albatross—Chaffinch.

A	C
L —arc—	H
B —ahi—	A
A —loo—	F
T —hie—	F
R —adi—	I
O —nio—	N
S —toi—	C
S	H

It is not desired that readers send in the answers to the puzzles. They are printed simply as brain teasers, and the correct answers will be printed the following week.

Suspicion.

"I understand the prohibition agents have their eyes on Smith."

"How did he come under suspicion?"

"He told a corking story."

Good Luck Rather.

"Out of a job again?"

"Yeh, and they put a woman in my place."

"Hard luck, old scout."

"Oh, I dunno. I'm going to marry the woman."

Telling Us About It.

"Mr. Gabson thinks well of himself."

"I don't object to that particularly," said Mr. Grumpson, "but the trouble with most people who think well of themselves is that they insist on taking everybody else into their confidence."

Both Tired.

Farmer—What sort of a car is that?

Tourist—An automobile. What sort of a machine is yours?

Farmer—An auto-mow-grass, but it won't.

MUST WE GROW OLD?

Vital Glands of Young Animals Said to Renew Vitality.

Scientists of world wide fame have found that the vital glands of young animals have remarkable powers for renewing vitality, creating energy and building up nerve force, brain and body. Heretofore this was thought to be possible only by gland operations. The extracts of these glands can now be obtained in capsule form, at a small cost. No drugs. Only genuine glands themselves. Purity guaranteed by $130,000,000.00 Chicago corporation. Feel years younger. Red-blooded men and women take Glandine to make their vitality still greater. Write Glandine Laboratories, Suite 408, 25 No. Wells St., Chicago, Ill., and learn how you can take Glandine treatment in your own home under a guarantee of satisfaction or no charge. —Adv.

GALLSTONE TROUBLES

A new booklet, written by Dr. E. E. Paddock, Box 5 P 201, Kansas City, Mo., tells of improved method of treating catarrhal inflammation of the Gall Bladder and Bile Ducts associated with Gall Stones, from which remarkable results are reported. Write for booklet and free trial plan.—Adv.

LEG SORES

The Bayles Distributing Co., 1856 Grand Ave., Kansas City, Mo., will mail Free Sample of ANTI-FLAMMA, a Soothing Anti-septic Poultice that draws out the poisons, stops the itching around sores and Heals While You Work. Write today describing case.—Adv.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa. —Adv.

CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

MOVING PICTURE BUSINESS

MAKE $25.00 TO $50.00 NIGHTLY. We furnish professional machine, films, supplies, etc., suitable for traveling or stationary use. No experience needed. We teach you this business. Little money required. Easy payments. Large catalog free. Dept. 400, Monarch Theatre Supply Co., 537 So. Dearborn St., Chicago.

LARGE PROFITS DAILY MADE IN THIS business. Openings everywhere. Small capital starts you. Complete outfits sold on installments. No experience needed. Our machines are used and endorsed by Government institutions. Catalog free. Atlas Moving Picture Company, Morton Building, Chicago.

CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

Information-- The rate for one insertion in The Saturday Blade and one insertion in the Chicago Ledger is 35 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next.

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500-514 N. Dearborn St., CHICAGO.

SALESMEN WANTED

SALESMEN WANTED TO SELL PROTECTOR, one piece work suits direct, factory to consumer. Patented drop seat. Sells on sight $3.50. Sample outfit including your suit sent complete for $2.50. You pay postman. Protector Sales Co., 702 Elm St., Dallas, Texas.

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS—IF YOU ARE MAKING LESS than $10.00 a day clear profit—get in touch with us. We want active agents to sell Hootch to drug stores, candy stores, news and cigar stands, restaurants, etc. They all order and want more. You build up a big business quick, using part time or all time. Beats house to house canvassing. You deal with business people. Just a few minutes makes the sale. Write and we will tell you what Hootch is and how it brings in the money. Address Hootch, Dept. 81, 229 W. Madison St., Chicago.

AGENTS—BIG MONEY DEMONSTRATING Tire-Cure. Automobile owners eager buyers. Marvelous. Punctures, cuts, blowouts in tires, tubes, permanently repaired in 5 minutes without tools or heat. Self-vulcanizing. Experience unnecessary. Saves 800% vulcanizing bills. $1 outfit repairs 100 punctures. Immense profits. Send for outfit and agency. Money-back guarantee to agents and customers. Eastern Rubber Products Co., Baltimore, Maryland.

AGENTS—GO INTO PERMANENT BUSINESS. No capital required. Should net $2500 to $5000 first year. Guaranteed products needed in every home. Repeat sales—big profits. Old established concern—products known everywhere. Many make sales of $30 to $50 per day. Practical sales helps, advertising matter furnished. Sample outfit free. Write today. W. T. Rawleigh Co., 351 Liberty St., Freeport, Ill.

DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME TRYING TO sell to white people. Our agents are cleaning up enormous profits selling Hair Dressing and Skin Whitener Soap to colored people. Colored people are simply crazy over it and will buy every time. 100% profit for you. Write for attractive proposition and get some of this easy money yourself. Marcellene Company, 618 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia.

AGENTS: REVERSIBLE RAINCOAT. NOT sold in stores. Two coats in one. Something brand new. Saves the price of expensive overcoat. Guaranteed waterproof or money back. Big seller. Emil Thor made $134 in one week. We manufacture and make to measure. No capital required. Sample furnished. Parker Mfg. Co., 609 Rue St., Dayton, Ohio.

AGENTS—FOR LENTEN SEASON. OUR Eradium (luminous) Crucifix, actually shines in the dark. Startling! Mysterious! Wonderful. Enthusiasm follows every demonstration. 150% profit. Sample $2. Sole manufacturers. The Pioneer Corporation, 1258 West 63d Street, Chicago, Illinois.

PORTRAIT AGENTS WANTED; LARGE profits can be obtained canvassing for photo enlargements. No money or experience required. Free samples and thirty days' credit. Write for particulars. E. F. McCormick Co., 314 West Superior Street, Chicago, Illinois.

GLORIANA TOILET PREPARATIONS—BIG sellers. Sure repeaters. We furnish agents with free samples and circulars. Guarantee their sales. Give exclusive territory and 100% profit. Gloriana Co., 1740 Linden Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

AGENTS—TO EARN BIG PROFITS WITH our quick-selling non-alcoholic extracts, toilet articles and household necessities. Open territory. No money required. We trust you. Hurry! Write today. Dept. 134, The Linro Co., St. Louis, Mo.

AGENTS—SUIT $13.98. MAKE $50.00 FIRST week selling our famous popular price made to measure suits. Greatest selling offer ever made—free outfit, write at once. The Famous Tailors, Dept. B, 318 W. Washington St., Chicago, Ill.

BIG MONEY AND FAST SALES. EVERY owner buys gold initials for his auto. You charge $1.50, make $1.35. Ten orders daily easy. Write for particulars and free samples. American Monogram Co., Dept. 104, East Orange, N. J.

HOW TO START IN BUSINESS FOR YOURself—A little book sent free to men and women anxious to make money by working part or full time. Clows Co., Philadelphia, Pa., Dept. 4-A.

AGENTS—TO SELL PATENTED ADJUSTable ironing board. Folds flat. Locks automatically. Write for details or remit $2.50 for board. Chicago Factory Distributors, 2745 Pine Grove Ave., Chicago.

AGENTS—A NEW ONE! HARPER'S FIBRE broom and Ten-Use brush set combined. Saves broom expense; lightens housework; easy seller; first order returnable. Harper Brush Works, Dept. B, Fairfield, Iowa.

AGENTS $1 TO $3 HOUR HANDLING KALomite Clotheswashing Compound. Exclusive territory. Big repeater. Free sample. Write Equitable Corporation, Dept. 94, 227 W. Huron St., Chicago.

AGENTS, $40 TO $100 A WEEK. FREE samples. Gold sign letters anyone can put on store windows. Liberal offer to general agents. Metallic Letter Co., 431 M, North Clark Chicago.

SALES AGENTS WANTED IN EVERY county to give all or spare time. Position worth $750 to $1500 yearly. We train the inexperienced. Novelty Cutlery Co., 23 Bar St., Canton, Ohio.

AGENTS — MAKE A DOLLAR AN HOUR. Sell Mendets, a patent patch for instantly mending leaks in all utensils. Sample package free. Collette Mfg. Co., Dept 707-C, Amsterdam, N. Y.

BIG PROFITS SELLING DUPLEX TRANSformers. Every auto owner needs them. Save gas. Banish spark plug trouble. Exclusive territory. Write quick. Jubilee Mfg. Co., 420 Sta. C, Omaha, Nebr.

AGENTS—LARGE MANUFACTURER WANTS agents to sell hosiery, underwear, shirts, dresses, skirts, waists, shoes, clothing, etc. Write for free samples. Madison Mills, 503 Broadway, New York.

AGENTS — I'VE A NEW SOAP GAME that's a dandy. New stuff; 100% profits. Sample and full layout free. Write quick. Lacassian Co., Dept. 21, St. Louis, Mo.

BEST PROPOSITION ON EARTH. KITCHen specialty every woman wants. Nothing like it in existence. 200% profit. Best Novelty Mfg. Co., Dept. E, 160 N. Wells, Chicago.

AGENTS WANTED—(Continued)

AGENTS—NEW PATENTED CURTAIN ROD, necessity in every home; big profit; 4 to 10 sales at every house. Write for free sample. Home Curtain Rod Co., Providence, R. I.

WE PAY $200 MONTHLY SALARY AND furnish rig and expenses to introduce guaranteed poultry and stock powders. Bigler Company, X-520, Springfield, Ill.

WE PAY $36 A WEEK AND EXPENSES and give a Ford auto to men to introduce poultry and stock compounds. Imperial Co., D32, Parsons, Kans.

AGENTS—OUR SOAP AND TOILET ARticle plan is a wonder. Get our free sample case offer. Ho-Ro-Co., 125 Locust, St. Louis.

WATERPROOF APRONS, $5 DOZEN UP; sample 75c. 3153 W. 31st, Cleveland.

HELP WANTED

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—to better yourself—to buy, sell or exchange goods or services, are offered here.

GOVERNMENT CLERKS NEEDED BADLY (men-women), $1600-$2300. Permanent. Few to travel. Write Mr. Ozment, Former Government Examiner, 106, St. Louis.

START A CANDY KITCHEN; EARN $100 to $500 weekly; own home; anwhere; I tell how. Hyde, Box 241, San Francisco.

MALE HELP WANTED

WANTED—1500 RAILWAY TRAFFIC INspectors; no experience; train for this profession thru sparetime home-study; easy terms; $110 to $200 monthly and expenses guaranteed, or money back. Outdoors; local or traveling; under big men who reward ability. Get free booklet CM-12, Stand. Business Training Inst., Buffalo, N. Y.

MEN CAN EARN $35 WEEKLY MAILING letters. The work may be done in spare time; no experience required. Send stamped addressed reply envelope. Normande, 147 West 23rd St., New York.

MEN WANTED TO QUALIFY FOR FIREmen, brakemen, experience unnecessary. Transportation furnished. Write A. Scoles, Supt., 101, St. Louis.

BE A DETECTIVE, $50-$100 WEEKLY; travel over world; experience unnecessary. American Detective Agency, 1000 Lucas, St. Louis.

FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN, BAGGAGEMEN, $140-$200; colored porters by railroads everywhere. Experience unnecessary. 686 Ry. Bureau, East St. Louis, Ills.

DETECTIVES EARN BIG MONEY. TRAVEL. Great demand everywhere. Experience unnecessary. Particulars free. Write, American Detective System, 1968 Broadway, New York.

MEN—AGE 17 TO 45. EXPERIENCE UNnecessary. Travel; make secret investigations, report. Salaries; expenses. American-Foreign Detective Agency, 126, St. Louis.

BOYS-MEN — BECOME AUTO EXPERTS. $35 week. Learn while earning. Franklin Institute, Dept. H 804, Rochester, N. Y.

BECOME A DETECTIVE IN YOUR TOWN. Experience unnecessary. National Detective Agency, 723, Youngstown, Ohio.

MEN WANTED FOR DETECTIVE WORK. Experience unnecessary. Write J. Ganor, former U. S. Govt. detective. 100 St. Louis.

BE A DETECTIVE. EXCELLENT OPPORtunity, good pay, travel. Write C. T. Ludwig, 320 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

AN EXCEPTIONAL OPENING THOSE DEsiring plain sewing machine work at home. No experience required. City, country. No canvassing. To prevent curiosity seekers send twelve cents, sample, information. Good Wear Cloth Co., Asbury Park, N. J.

LADIES — MAKE SPARETIME MONEY clipping ads for us. Instructions, 10c; refunded if dissatisfied. Cope Adv. Agency, St. Louis, Mo.

GIRLS-WOMEN — BECOME DRESS-COStume designers. $150 month. Sample lessons free. Write immediately. Franklin Institute, Dept. H 861, Rochester, N. Y.

MALE AND FEMALE HELP WANTED

CLERK-TYPISTS (MEN, WOMEN, OVER 17), for government departments, $120 month. Previous experience unnecessary. For free particulars of examinations, write John Leonard (former Civil Service examiner), 1067 Equitable Bldg., Washington, D. C.

BOOKS

"FROM THE BALL ROOM TO HELL" mailed anywhere, 30c. L. E. Muncy, 136 E. Pleasant Ave., A, Syracuse, N. Y.

OLD COINS

WATCH YOUR CHANGE. WE OFFER FROM 10% to 1,000% premium on old cents, dimes, quarters, half dollars, dollars, etc. We buy all old coins and bills. Get posted. Send 4c for large illustrated coin circular. It may mean large profit to you. Send now. Numismatic Bank, Dept. 12, Fort Worth, Texas.

SHORT STORIES WANTED

WRITE PHOTOPLAYS: $25-$300 PAID anyone for suitable ideas. Experience unnecessary; complete outline free. Producers League, 420 St. Louis.

FOR SALE

$16 TAKES CABINET PHONOGRAPH AND 28 records. Many other bargains. Send no money. Write for particulars. Economy Sample Shop, 59 E. Van Buren St., Dept. 4, Chicago.

HAIR GOODS

GIRLS: IMPROVE YOUR LOOKS! TRANSformations, ear muffs and switches matched to sample. Satisfaction guaranteed. Write for prices. Mill Beauty Shop, 1522 Stevens Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

PATENTS

PATENTS—SEND FOR FREE BOOK. Contains valuable information for inventors. Send sketch of your invention for free opinion of its patentable nature. Prompt service. (Twenty years' experience.) Talbert & Talbert, 4276 Talbert Bldg., Washington, D. C.

INVENTORS DESIRING TO SECURE PATent should write for our guide book, "How to Get Your Patent." Send model or sketch and description for our opinion of its patentable nature. Randolph Co., Dept. 174, Washington, D. C.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

$25 FOR $10,000—WOULD YOU PAY IT? It is worth it—a ground floor opportunity in one of the best in the "Eldorado" gusher field, Arkansas. Not stock, but an actual interest in over 2100 acres of well located oil leases. One well near the Busey gusher contracted for. Should return your investment each month for several years. Thousands have made fortunes. Attach check to ad and send in or write for maps and literature. If you are not satisfied we will return money in ten days. Address Dorado Oil Syndicate, 210 Flatiron Bldg., Fort Worth, Texas.

$10 MONTHLY INVESTED IN FLORIDA oyster culture pays estimated income $100 per month until end of world. Free information—12,000 words—including U. S. Government quotations, Government $10,000—survey sworn statements. Florida Board of Trade, Apalachicola, Florida.

TEN DOLLARS MAY MAKE YOU TEN thousand in six months if interested in Texas oil leases. For particulars write E. C. Crowl, Room 6, Dundee Bldg., Fort Worth, Texas.

$2.00 MONTHLY BUYS DEED TO LAND and interest in oil wells that should pay $100 for each $2.00 invested. Write for particulars. Texas Gulf Company, 633 First Nat'l Bank, Houston, Texas.

AN INITIAL INVESTMENT OF FIVE DOLlars may make you rich. Secured by deed to land and interest in oil wells. Write me at once for full particulars. M. F. Hinckley, Beatty Bldg., Houston, Texas, Dept. A.

$25 (IN PAYMENTS) BUYS OIL LEASE which may mean $10,000 in few months. Write for folder. Texoland Syndicate, 626A Laughlin Bldg., Los Angeles.

FARMS FOR SALE

POOR MAN'S CHANCE. $5 DOWN, $5 monthly buys 40 acres, productive land. Near town. Price $200. Box 425 S, Carthage, Missouri.

FREE GOVERNMENT LAND. 200,000 ACRES in Arkansas for homesteading. Send 35c for Homesteaders' Guide Book and Map of State. Farm-Home Co., Little Rock, Ark.

FARM LAND

FREE GOVERNMENT LANDS—OUR OFFIcial 112-page book, "Vacant Government Lands," lists and describes every acre in every county in U. S.; tells location, place to apply, how secured free. 1921 diagrams and tables, new laws, lists, etc.; price 50 cents postpaid. Webb Publishing Co., Dept. 108, St. Paul, Minn.

WISCONSIN FARM LANDS

LANDOLOGY SPECIAL NUMBER JUST OUT, containing 1921 facts of clover land in Marinette County, Wisconsin. If for a home or as an investment you are thinking of buying good farm lands, where farmers grow rich, send at once for this special number of Landology. It is free on request. Address Skidmore-Riehle Land Co., 26 Skidmore-Riehle Bldg., Marinette, Wisc.

MICHIGAN FARM LANDS FOR SALE

A BARGAIN FOR THE FARMSEEKER. Hardwood land in Antrim, Kalkaska and Otsego counties, Mich., close to markets, schools, R. R. near lakes and streams, at only $15 to $30 per acre. Easy terms. Special features for helping settlers. Ask for big free booklet and full information. Swigart, X-1245, First National Bank Bld'g, Chicago, Ill.

PHOTOGRAPHY

FREE ENLARGEMENT 5 x 7 INCHES FROM each roll sent us for developing and finishing. Mail your films today, or send for prices and particulars. Topeka Photo Supply Co., Box 427, Topeka, Kans.

PHOTOPLAY STORIES

IDEAS FOR MOVING PICTURE PLAYS wanted by producers. Big prices paid. Submit ideas at once in any form for immediate consideration, or write for interesting free photoplay booklet. Bristol Photoplay Studios, Suite 415-C Bristol Building, New York.

LOST HEIRS

"LOST HEIRS," A 400-PAGE BOOK, FILLED with names, for lost heirs and missing kin, from different parts of the world. Chancery court of England, Ireland and Bank of England lists included. Price $1. International Claim Agency, Dept. 169, Pittsburgh, Pa.

SONG POEMS WANTED

WRITE A SONG POEM—LOVE, MOTHER, home, Comic or any subject. I compose music and guarantee publication. Send words today. Edward Trent, 649 Reaper Block, Chicago.

MEDICAL

SUFFERERS FROM KIDNEY AND BLADder trouble, causing backache, nervousness, tired and worn out feeling, frequent desire to urinate, smarting and burning. Do not suffer any longer but write us for free symptom blank and advice. Hinze Medical Institute, 22 Washington Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn.

TRICKS—GAMES

MAGIC GOODS, BOOKS, CARDS, LODEstone tricks. Catalog free. B. I. Smith Co., Newark, Mo.

MAGIC GOODS, CARDS, GAMES, BOOKS, tricks. Catalogue free. National Supply Co., Box 116, Edina, Mo.

MISCELLANEOUS

RELIANCE ANTISEPTIC. LADIES FREE sample, with E. Z. Lift circular. Wallthal Company, Hagerstown, Md.

WATCHES—JEWELRY

21 JEWEL WATCH $4.99! ALL MAKES about half regular price. Agents wanted. List free. Rex Co., Andover, Ohio.

PERSONAL

MARRY! FREE DIRECTORY WITH DEscriptions and photos. Bonafide Co., Dept. 5, Kansas City, Mo.

GET MARRIED — BEST MATRIMONIAL paper published. Free for stamp. Correspondent, Toledo, Ohio.

MARRY RICH—PAPER WITH NAME, ADdresses, descriptions, pictures, 25c. Sent sealed. Box 1511 B, Memphis, Tenn.

IF YOU WANT A PROSPEROUS AND REfined husband, write Willard, Box 749, Chicago, Illinois.

WEALTHY YOUNG LADY WANTS HUSband. F-Box 35, League, Toledo, Ohio.

LONELY MAIDEN, 27, WOULD MARRY. Write for picture. Box 150B, Syracuse, N. Y.

PERSONAL—(Continued)

ARE YOU LONELY OR UNHAPPY? CHEER up. The king of matchmakers will send you the queen of correspondence papers (mailed in a plain sealed envelope), without obligating you and no follow-up mail to coax or bother you. Pay later if you wish. Gents' membership $2. Ladies' membership free. Strictly confidential plan (established in 1911). We have your soul-mate of your nationality and your religion. Address, Happy Home Magazine, 211 Presto Building, Pittsburgh, Pa.

WEAK, NERVOUS, RUN DOWN MEN; IF you get up in the morning with a dull brain, tired nerves, an ache in the back, a dread of the toil and hardships of every day life, these are signs that some of the organs or functions of your body are not in a healthy condition and should have attention at once. We cure chronic, nervous, kidney, bladder diseases. Book, symptom blank and advice free. Dr. Meyers, 316 Nicollet Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.

MEN—NO MATTER WHAT YOU HAVE tried or how old your case our tablet preparation rapidly overcomes all such conditions; it gives greater strength, restores in less time and at less cost than anything under the sun. The tablet with the wonderful reputation. $1 per box, 4 for $3. Crown Drug Co., Dept. A, Station E, Box 50, Toledo, Ohio.

MEN WHO ARE LOSING OUT IN LIFE CAN find a marvelous remedy and complete restoration in 808 Tablets—the wonderful 48-hour medicine. Different from anything ever heard of. Holds world's record. $1 per box. Particulars and wonderful testimonials free. 808 Chemical Co., Dept. G, Pittsburg, Kan.

MEN—OUR TREATMENT NEVER FAILS TO restore strength to those troubled with nervous, weak, run-down and despondent conditions that undermine good health. Costs nothing if not cured. Write for free book. Cumberland Chemical Co., 32 Berry Block, Nashville, Tenn.

THOUSANDS ANXIOUS TO MARRY, WORTH to $100,000. Confidential descriptions free in plain sealed envelope. Satisfaction guaranteed. Long established, reliable, trustworthy. People's Club, Box 94, Los Angeles, California.

MARRY. THOUSANDS CONGENIAL PEOple, worth from $1,000 to $50,000 seeking early marriage; descriptions, photos, introductions free. Sealed. Either sex. Send no money. Address Standard Cor. Club, Grayslake, Ill.

ARE YOU BASHFUL, SELF-CONSCIOUS? Embarrassed in company? These troubles overcome. Write for particulars. Correspondence confidential. A. O. Veritas, 1400 Broadway, New York.

MARRY FOR PROSPERITY, HAPPINESS. Hundreds wealthy. Best, most successful. Write, be convinced. Confidential. Descriptions free. Mrs. Budd, Box 753, San Francisco, California.

WOMEN — ERGOIL SAFELY RELIEVES. No harm or inconvenience with work. Results guaranteed or money refunded. Prepaid, $1.25. Dermitone Remedy Co., Dept. 4, 127 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

MARRY; MOST SUCCESSFUL "HOME Maker;" hundreds rich; confidential; reliable; years experience; descriptions free. "The Successful Club," Box 556, Oakland, California.

MARRY. BEST, LARGEST. ESTABLISHED 16 years. Thousands wealthy members. Old Reliable Club. Mrs. Wrubel, Box 26, Oakland, Calif.

CATHOLICS WISHING TO MARRY, WANTing introductions. Booklet free. Catholic Correspondence Club. S. D. Grand Rapids, Mich.

MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH photos and descriptions free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 28, Kansas City, Mo.

HUNDREDS: NAMES, ADDRESSES, DEscriptions. Also pictures, lonesome marriageable people, 25c silver. Box 3317, Boston, Mass.

NOTICE—A LARGE COLLECTION OF PICtures and descriptions of beautiful ladies sent free to any one upon request. Address Prof. Ward, B520, Valley, Nebr.

ANYONE DESIRING A WIFE OR HUSBAND of wealth, send stamped envelope for particulars to Lillian Sproul, Station H, Cleveland, Ohio.

SIXTH AND SEVENTH BOOK OF MOSES. Egyptian secrets. Black art, other rare books. Catalogue free. Star Book Co., 26 B5, Camden, N. J.

MARRY — FREE PHOTOS, BEAUTIFUL ladies; description and directory; pay when married. New Plan Co., Dept. 21, Kansas City, Mo.

GET MARRIED: CUPID'S MAGAZINE— Thousands pretty women, handsome men, hundreds wealthy; free. Sunflower Club, Cimarron, Kansas.

MARRIAGE PAPER FREE; LADIES, GENtlemen, desiring marriage; many rich; confidential. Southern Agency, Box 402, Montgomery, Ala.

GET MARRIED — MANY WEALTHY clients desiring early marriage. Address Opal Club, Box 92, Rosiere, N. Y.

CANADIAN MATRIMONIAL PAPER. BIG issue. Descriptions, names, addresses 25c. A. McCreery, Publisher, Chatham, Ontario.

LADIES DESIRING EARLY MARRIAGE say so and send 10c to Sweetheart's Club, Barnes City, Iowa.

MAN OF HEALTH, WEALTH AND REFINEment considering marriage, Ladies, write me. Box 684, Dennison, Ohio.

MARRY? JOIN THE "HOME CORREspondence Club." Particulars free. Address, Box 23, Grand Rapids, Mich.

MARRY—THOUSANDS; WORTH $5,000 TO $400,000; willing to marry; list free. Ralph Hyde, San Francisco, Cal.

CALIFORNIA BACHELOR, WORTH $40,-000, will marry. E-Box 325, Club, Ft. Wayne, Ind.

CIVIL ENGINEER, 27, WITH $40,000 wants wife. W-Box 432, League, Columbus, Ohio.

LADY FARMER, 35, WORTH $60,000, would marry. N-Box 1134, League, Detroit, Mich.

Free Yourself of Pile Suffering

Sure, Speedy and Safe Relief from Piles Assured by My Method of Internal Treatment. Far Superior to Ointments, Salves, Dilators or Other Treatments that Simply Ease But Never Cure.

Just Chew a Pleasant Tablet—Send for This Free To-day

Don't Be Cut

Try This Home Treatment That Anyone Can Use Without Discomfort or Loss of Time and Free Yourself From Piles.

My internal method for the relief of piles is the correct one. Thousands upon thousands of cases, reported as cured, testify to this, and I want you to give this method a trial entirely free of any charge.

No matter whether your case is of long standing or recent development—whether it is chronic or acute—whether it is occasional or permanent—you should send for this treatment.

I especially want to send it to those apparently hopeless cases where all forms of salves, ointments, dilators, etc., have failed.

I want you to realize that my method is the one infallible treatment that brings real lasting relief.

Waited To Test Permanent Merit

Camden, N. J., 2817 Polk Ave.

Mr. E. R. Page,
Dear Sir:—

You will have to excuse me for not answering your letter before, but I wanted to convince myself of the merit of your treatment before replying.

Now in regard to the treatment I cannot praise it too highly.

After 7 months of continual pain I was surprised how quickly your treatment worked.

I tried several different kinds of treatments and I found them all wanting.

I was on the verge of going to a doctor for an operation when I saw your advertisement.

It appealed to me because to cure piles you have to know what causes them.

It is now 6 months since I have taken your treatment and I have not had any trouble since.

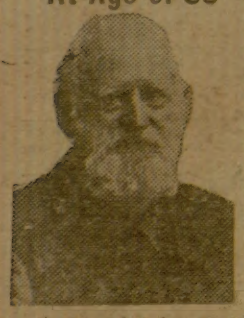
I personally recommend this treatment to all pile sufferers.

Wishing you the best of success, I remain, gratefully yours,

HARRY SCHLECHTER.

Now Completely Cured

At Age of 88—Enthusiastic.



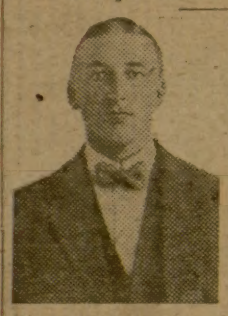
Homer, Mich.
Mr. E. R. Page,
Marshall, Mich.
Dear Sir:

I want you to know what your treatment has done for me. I had suffered with piles for many years and used suppositories and all kinds of treatments, but never got relief until I tried yours. Am now completely cured. Although I am 88 years old and the oldest active blacksmith in Michigan, I feel years younger since the piles left me. I will surely recommend it to all I know who suffer this way. You can use my letter any way you wish and I hope it will lead others to try this wonderful remedy.

Yours truly, J. L. LYON.

"I Could Not Work"

"Finally Secured Your Treatment"



Max, Minn.
Mr. E. R. Page,
Marshall, Mich.
Dear Sir:

After suffering for five years with itching and protruding piles and at times so bad that I could not work, after trying all kinds of remedies I could get hold of, I finally secured your treatment and I am completely cured.

Hoping this will help other sufferers, I remain,

Yours respectfully,
ALFRED SETTERBURG.

Suffered Terribly

Feels Like a New Man.

I have been a sufferer from piles of the worst form for the past six years. I had consulted with the best doctors, but to no avail. I had been unable to work for the two weeks previous to the time I sent for your treatment, and suffered terribly, not being able to find a position I could rest in.

The day I received the medicine I took two pile tablets after supper and one pill before I retired. The next day I worked and have continued to work ever since. I feel like a new man.

I have recommended your treatment to a friend of mine who is bothered with itching piles, as I know it will knock 'em out.

Thanking you kindly for the prompt attention given my order, I am, yours for success. Ira M. Sacora, Ainsworth, Iowa.

Only Effective Cure

I wish to express my appreciation of your pile cure. Having doctored with different doctors but will say have found your cure the only effective one. Respectfully yours, Hiram Gray, Pleasant City, Ohio.

I was a sufferer from piles. Two doctors had said there was nothing that would do me any good but an operation. First I tried a sample of your Pile Treatment and was greatly relieved. Then I ordered a regular Treatment and now I feel that I am cured. I advise all people who suffer with piles to take the Page Treatment. Sincerely yours, J. W. Shores, Box 25, Tallassee, Ala.

There is a big difference between being temporarily helped—having the pain leave for a few hours or days—and being **cured** of piles. So please notice that those whose letters are quoted especially state that they have been **cured.**

Don't let anything delay you, but write now, satisfy yourself, ask any questions, put me to the test—but above everything else send the coupon for a free trial of this most wonderful combination treatment.

Cured 15 Years Ago

NEVER A RETURN

One of the most grateful letters ever received in my office is dated from Gate City, Virginia, and signed by Mr. T. H. Quillin.

Mr. Quillin encloses his photograph (shown herewith) and writes that he used my method for treating piles 15 years ago. He states that he was cured at that time and has never had any return of his trouble. He orders a treatment for his son.

This is a case to be proud of.

E. R. PAGE.

Son Cured Sound and Well—Cures Where Others Fail

Replying to your recent inquiry I am glad to be able to state that the two large-size packages of Treatment I ordered for my son **cured him sound and well.**

I have tried several remedies but none seemed to have any effect. I was told by some that there was no such thing as a **Home Cure** for piles. Then by chance I picked up a piece of scrap paper and saw your advertisement. I asked for a free sample, got it, and after I had seen what it had done, I ordered a large-size treatment and it almost completely cured my son. Then I ordered another, and I say I can bless the day that I picked up that scrap of paper and answered your advertisement. I can't say enough for the E. R. Page Pile Remedy. I have recommended it to my friends here and sent some of your pamphlets to friends in other states.

Now you may use this letter or any part of it as you may see fit, to introduce your wonderful remedy. With best wishes for your success, I remain, yours very truly, L. M. Coplin, Box 134, Deering, Mo.

Suffered For Years, "But Wouldn't Know It"

Certainly a Success.

After suffering years with Piles I feel now as if I had never had them. Your remedy is certainly a success and cannot be praised too much. Had it not been for running across your ad in the World Almanac I suppose I would still be bothered with this awful disease.

I want to thank you for your kindness, and if I ever have an opportunity of recommending it I will do so.

Sincerely yours, E. R. Raymond, 238 Broadway, San Diego, Cal.

Only One SURE Way

My Treatment Starts Where Most Others Leave Off. But When You Finish With Mine You Are Rid of Piles For Keeps.

The only way in the world that you will ever find final relief for piles, is to treat them internally.

Don't let anyone persuade you to submit to an operation until you have at least given my method a trial.

This is not a new idea nor something that has not been given a thorough test. This system of treatment has been sold for nearly a quarter of a century, and I have received thousands of letters testifying to the truth of every claim, every statement that I have ever made.

Take advantage of this opportunity to relieve yourself of piles and their pain.

Suffered For Over 25 Years

Troubled No More

It gives me great pleasure to write and tell you I am troubled no more with Piles. I am 64 years of age and have suffered for over 25 years; have tried all kinds of Ointment, etc., without success.

You are at liberty to use my name in reference to your Pile Cure and also my photograph, which I am sending you.

With best regards, I remain, yours very truly, John W. Shuman, 1445 N. 8th St., Philadelphia, Pa.

"Sample Must Have Cured Me"

Bleeding Piles for Six Years

San Bernardino, California
Mr. E. R. Page,
Marshall, Mich.
Dear Sir:

Your Pile Tablets are surely wonderful. I was troubled with bleeding piles, off and on, for six years; couldn't get anything to cure them until I read your ad. in the daily paper. The sample must have cured me — I haven't been bothered since.

Yours truly,
Mrs. M. J. Manbeck,
R. R. Route 2,
Box 96.

FREE Pile Remedy Coupon

MR. E. R. PAGE,
382 L Page Bldg., Marshall, Mich.

Please send to me, without obligation or cost to me, a trial package of your combination treatment for Piles.

Name .....

Address .....

Town .....State .....

E. R. Page

382 L Page Building
MARSHALL, MICH.